

**BARGAINING CITIZENSHIP:
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS, THE STATE, AND MARRIAGE MIGRANTS
IN
SOUTH KOREA**

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A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland
June 2015

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Since 1948, South Korea has maintained restrictive immigration and citizenship policies that promote ethnic homogeneity and discourage the settlement of immigrants who do not have marital or family ties to ethnic Koreans. From 2005, the Korean government has instituted unprecedented reforms that have included local voting rights to permanent residents, dual citizenship for certain categories of citizens, and policies that promote multiculturalism; such reforms have made Korea the country with the most progressive stance on immigration in East Asia. Why has the Korean government proactively embraced immigrant incorporation under the banner of multiculturalism, after decades of promoting ethnic homogeneity and racial purity?

In contrast to previous studies that focus on the adoption of liberal international norms, the remnants of the developmental state, and grassroots pressures from civil society, this dissertation explains immigrant incorporation in Korea as the unintended consequences of the negotiations between state efforts to regulate women's access to rights and the attempts by women's organizations and migrant women to secure rights and expand memberships. Although they comprise less than twenty percent of the total foreign population, marriage migrants, or foreign women married to Korean men, have been situated at the center of efforts to promote multiculturalism. Consequently, gender has figured prominently in shaping immigrant incorporation. Through a framework that defines citizenship as a negotiated relationship, this study demonstrates that women and the state are engaged in ongoing negotiations over three dimensions of citizenship: access to rights, rights, and memberships where the outcome of these negotiations is uneven and contradictory. Grassroots women's organizations capitalized on the growing significance of marriage migrants in their attempt to re-negotiate the terms of women's membership

and rights. In bargaining with the state however, women's organizations have become implicated in state efforts to incorporate migrant women as wives and mothers based upon the very patriarchal ideals of womanhood and family that women's activists have long struggled against. Thus, citizenship ultimately poses a paradox for women, one that offers emancipatory potential for equality and inclusion while reinforcing gender ideals that exclude and marginalize them. Based on ethnographic and archival research, including personal interviews with fifty-one women's activists, migrant women, and policymakers conducted throughout the Seoul- Gyeonggi metropolitan area from September 2011 to November 2012, this dissertation highlights the unintended consequences of women's attempts to bargain with the state.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the support of many people to whom I owe a debt of deep gratitude. For her extraordinary mentorship that went above and beyond the call of duty, I thank Erin Chung whose unflinching encouragement and steadfast support have from the very beginning made this project possible. Thank you for setting the bar high and for expecting no less! I am grateful to Michael Hanchard for his unwavering support and sagacious guidance in helping me to cultivate my strengths throughout different stages of this project. I thank Mimi Keck for piquing my interest in qualitative methods before I even began fieldwork and for sharing comforting words of wisdom when I needed them most.

I am especially indebted to the countless people who supported me during my field research in Korea. I would like to thank Kim Hyun-Mee at Yonsei University who enthusiastically took me in from the first meeting and opened my eyes to what it means to be a scholar-activist in Korea. I owe a special thanks to the members of the Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center, especially Heo-Oh Young Sook who welcomed me openly without judgment as an equal, friend, and colleague. I would also like to acknowledge the esteemed members of the Migrant Women Human Rights Forum who took an interest in my research and who encouraged me to write in Korean. I am grateful to the Korea Foundation and the Korean-American Education Commission (Fulbright) in Korea for their generous financial and administrative support during my field research.

For their collegial support and warm-spirited camaraderie, I thank Meghan Luhman, Nicole Thornton, Ayako Hiramatsu, Katherine Goktepe, and Karyn Wang. For always reminding me of the good things in life, and for making me laugh even in the most trying of times, I owe everything to my parents.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Total Fertility Rate (TFR), 1960-95	64
Table 3.2 Total Fertility Rate, 1997-2007	73
Table 3.3 MGEF Budget, 2001-2013.....	77
Table 3.4 Number of Children in Multicultural Families in Korea	79
Table 3.5 Budget for Multicultural Family Policies, 2008-2014.....	92
Table 4.1 List of Member Organizations in the Migrant Women's Advocacy Coalition.....	122
Table 5.1 Requirements for Simplified Naturalization.....	146
Table 5.2 Naturalizations by Marriage Migrants, 2002-2012.....	146

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Tables	v
I. Introduction	1
Korean Multiculturalism.....	1
Women and Negotiated Citizenship	12
Korea as a Country of Immigration	18
Methodology	21
Organization of the Chapters	25
II. Citizenship as a Negotiated Relationship.....	28
T.H. Marshall as Point of Departure.....	28
Feminist Approaches to Citizenship.....	30
The Intersections of Migration, Gender, and Citizenship	37
Citizenship as a Negotiated Relationship	48
The Paradox of Citizenship: the Price of Rights.....	52
III. Population Anxieties, Family Policies, and the Gendered Division of Labor:	
Women as Care Providers.....	55
Family Planning as Women's Civic Duty	57
The Expansion of Women's Rights and the Family in "Crisis"	64
The Growth of Women's Policy.....	65
From Women to Family Policy	68
Instituting Family Policy: Making Families "Healthy"	72
Multicultural Family Support Policies: Incorporating Marriage Migrants.....	79
The Act to Support Multicultural Families.....	87
Mobilizing Women as Providers of Family Welfare.....	93
IV. Advocating Migrant Women: Negotiating Citizenship through Human	
Rights	99
The Women's Human Rights Movement	101
Feminizing Migrant Issues: Migrant Women's Human Rights.....	111
Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center	116
The Price of Human Rights	125
Migrant Women as Victims.....	126
The State as Male Protector.....	134
Service Provision at the Cost of Advocacy	136
Reproducing Patriarchy	140

V. Citizenship as a Paradox for Migrant Women.....	143
Three Strategies for Negotiating Membership.....	147
Empowerment through Paid Employment	147
Activists within Civil Society	153
Exercising Political Rights	158
Korea's Multiculturalism Revisited.....	166
<i>Tamunhwa</i> and the Korean Women's Movement	173
VI. Conclusion. Citizenship under Negotiation.....	180
Re-conceptualizing Citizenship	185
Bibliography	188

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“That Korea has already transitioned to a multi-racial, multi-cultural society is irreversible...we must dedicate our efforts to integrating migrants through multicultural policies.”

—President Roh Moo-Hyun, April 26 2006

Korean Multiculturalism

In late April 2006, the President of South Korea (hereafter Korea), Roh Moo-Hyun proclaimed that Korea has transitioned away from a one race-nation (*danil minjok*) to a “multi-racial, multicultural society” (*Yonhap News* 26 April 2006). After over half of a century of propagating exclusionary ideologies based on the primacy of racial purity and ethnic homogeneity that denied the acceptance of mixed-race individuals as members of the nation, the proclamation marked the introduction of a widespread campaign to promote multiculturalism, or *tamunhwa*. At the center of this multiculturalism campaign were marriage migrants, mostly foreign-born women married to Korean men and their families who are collectively called “multicultural families” (*tamunhwa kajok*). As part of this campaign, the Korean government implemented an array of policy and legislative reforms that included the Basic Act on the Treatment of Foreigners (2007), the Act to Support Multicultural Families (2008), followed by the announcement of the 1st Basic Plan on Foreigner Policy (2008) and the 1st Basic Plan on Multicultural Family Support Policy (2010). Taken together, these reforms represent the Korean government’s blueprint for how it seeks to incorporate foreign residents as members of Korean society.¹

¹ According to Article 1, the purpose of the Basic Act is to “help foreigners in Korea reach their full potential in adjusting to Korean society and to create a society where Koreans and foreigners understand and respect each other in ways that contribute to social progress and integration in Korea.” The Basic Act called for the Basic Plan on Foreigner Policy (Article 5) which outlines the policy tasks and objectives for policies related to foreign residents every five years. Meanwhile the Act to Support Multicultural Families aims to “contribute to the improvement of the quality of life for multicultural families and to foster the unity of society by helping multicultural family members enjoy a stable family life.”

From 2007 to 2014, the central government spent approximately US\$497 million on multicultural family support programs, the majority of which was distributed to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MGEF), the main governmental ministry in charge of multicultural family policies (H. Kim 2012, NABO 2014). Since 2007, more than 150 different voluntary civic organizations have partnered with the state to operate a nationwide network of “multicultural family support centers” (*tamunhwa kajok jiwŏn sent’ŏ*) that offer a variety of welfare services, including counseling and language education programs to multicultural families (MGEF 2013). Not only in government affairs and civil society, but also in academia, multiculturalism has been one of the most researched and written about topics over the past few years. In 2010, over 15,000 newspaper articles and over 800 academic journal articles contained the word “*tamunhwa*,” according to DBpia, a major database for academic journals and the Korea Integrated Newspaper Database System (KINDS) (Ahn 2012, Seol 2010).

When it comes to immigration and demographics, Korea shares striking similarities with Japan and Taiwan. Like Japan and Taiwan, Korea maintains restrictive immigration policies that deny the right to family unification for low-skilled migrant workers and descent-based citizenship policies that make it impossible for migrant laborers without marital or family ties to ethnic Koreans to acquire citizenship (E. Chung 2010a, Friedman 2010, Lee and Park 2005). Korean foreign labor policies render migrant workers ineligible to apply for citizenship and permanent residency by mandating that migrant workers return to their country of origin after a sanctioned period of time (Seol and Skrentny 2009).² Meanwhile, the long-term presence of third and even fourth

² The nationality law stipulates that applicants for naturalization must reside in the country consecutively for at least five years.

generation immigrants from China, or *hwagyo*, who lack substantive rights as foreign residents demonstrate the exclusionary aspects of descent-based Korean citizenship policies (N. Kim 2012). However, continued labor shortages have prompted Korea, like Japan and Taiwan, to permit the “side-door” immigration of migrant workers which has contributed to the accelerated growth of the foreign resident population over the past three decades (Lim 2003). At the end of 2013, the Korean Immigration Service (KIS) within the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) which keeps track of foreign residents reported nearly 1 million registered long-term foreign nationals residing in the country, with the vast majority of them migrant workers.

In addition, Korea along with Japan and Taiwan face demographic challenges posed by the fastest ageing populations and the lowest fertility rates in the developed world. Although the population aged sixty-five and older presently constitutes approximately 12 percent of the total population, Korea has experienced a 35 percent increase in the aged population from 2002 to 2012, making it the country with the most rapidly ageing society in the world (NSO 2012). Japan is already the world’s oldest society with the aged population comprising approximately one-fourth of the country’s total population. In terms of fertility, Korea and Japan respectively recorded fertility rates of 1.08 and 1.26 in 2005, the lowest among OECD countries (OECD 2012). In 2010, Taiwan reported the world’s lowest fertility rate at 0.9 children per woman, far below the world’s average replacement rate of 2.0 children per woman (Jennings 2011). Based on these “ultra-low” fertility rates and rapidly ageing societies, East Asian countries are confronted with a steep demographic decline that has serious implications for future growth (Jones et al 2009).

Unlike Japan and Taiwan however, the Korean government has taken a pro-active approach to immigrant incorporation under the banner of the multiculturalism campaign (A. Kim 2009, N. Kim 2012, D. Seol 2010). In 2006, Korea granted local voting rights to permanent residents, making it the first country in East Asia to grant political rights to non-citizens (E. Chung 2010a). Since 2009, the MOJ has operated the Korean Immigration and Integration Program (KIIP) which encourages eligible foreign residents to naturalize by offering an expedited path to citizenship in exchange for receiving instruction in Korean language and culture.³ Furthermore, the National Assembly passed a “multiple nationality law” (*boksu gukjeok*) in 2010, which recognizes dual nationalities for certain categories of citizens (Chung and Kim 2012). These sweeping reforms to incorporate immigrants have made Korea one of the most progressive countries in East Asia when it comes to immigration.

While Japan extends civil and social rights to foreign residents and promotes a “harmonious” coexistence between foreign residents and local citizens, it has failed to incorporate many of its foreign residents, including long-term Korean residents, by equating nationality with ethnicity (E. Chung 2010b). Furthermore, the Taiwanese government maintains strict distinctions between its citizens who maintain their household registration in Taiwan and non-citizens, who are permitted access to employment and residency, but are subject to immigration control (Friedman 2010). In contrast to Japan and Taiwan, why has the Korean government prioritized the

³ The Korean Immigration and Integration Program (KIIP) consists of 455 hours of instruction: 415 hours in Korean language and 50 hours in “understanding Korean society.” Successful completion of the program exempts applicants for naturalization from the written citizenship exam. It should be noted that while the program is open to any foreign resident, not all foreign residents are eligible to apply for naturalization.

incorporation of multi-ethnic, multi-racial immigrants after decades of promoting ideologies that insisted on racial purity and ethnic homogeneity?

Moreover, the multiculturalism campaign in Korea targets a very specific and exclusive category of immigrants: marriage migrants. Marriage migrants refer to migrants whose legal status is legitimated by marriage to a national of the host country. Since the late 1980s, Korea as well as Japan and Taiwan has experienced severe shortages of young women in the rural areas which local governments and commercial brokers sought to address by facilitating cross-border marriages and the influx of marriage migrants from other parts of East and Southeast Asia (H. Lee 2008, Nakamatsu 2003, H. Wang 2007). As foreign spouses of citizens who have access to citizenship, marriage migrants represent an exception to restrictive immigration and descent-based citizenship policies in all three countries. In Korea, the extraordinary public attention paid to marriage migrants has been disproportionate to their numbers. In 2013, marriage migrants with foreign nationality numbered 150,865, constituting approximately fifteen percent of the total foreign population (KIS, 2013). Even when the family members of marriage migrants are taken into account, multicultural families account for less than two percent of the total population of Korea. Why then has Korea's multiculturalism campaign focused exclusively on women married to Korean men, who constitute less than one-fifth of the entire foreign population?

Based on a Korean national identity that has long espoused ideologies of ethnic homogeneity and racial purity, we would expect that immigrants would remain unincorporated and denied substantive rights much like previous generations of foreign residents and mixed-race people in Korea (M. Lee 2008). On the contrary, the Korean government has promoted a multiculturalism campaign that targets the incorporation of

marriage migrants and their families. Unlike previous studies that has looked to international norms, Korea's developmental state, and pressures from civil society, this dissertation focuses on the role of Korean women's organizations and their engagements with the state in shaping immigrant incorporation. Treating citizenship as a negotiated relationship that entails emancipatory potential as well as unavoidable compromise, I argue that Korea's multiculturalism campaign reflects the unintended consequences of negotiations between state efforts to regulate women's access to rights and women's organizations attempts to gain rights and expand memberships for women. By focusing on the relations between women and the state, this dissertation situates immigrant incorporation within the broader analytical framework of gender and citizenship.

Theories of Liberal Convergence: International Norms

Theories of liberal convergence point to international norms to account for why liberal states accept more immigrants than their restrictionist rhetoric and policies intend. According to this view, liberal norms impose a self-limited sovereignty on liberal states to accept "unwanted" immigrants (Freeman 1994, Joppke 1998). Thus, liberal states are internally constrained by norms that undermine effective immigration control. In addition, pro-immigrant actors, such as lawyers, nongovernmental organizations, and local governments have utilized norms to successfully persuade national governments that are reluctant to extend rights to non-citizens. In her study of norms and pro-immigrant NGOs in Japan, Amy Gurowitz (1999: 442) argues that pro-immigrant actors secured rights for Korean settlers and migrant workers in Japan by mobilizing human rights norms which effectively linked immigration issues to Japan's preoccupation with its international image. Similarly, Nora Kim (2009) explains the expansion of migrants' rights in Korea

by focusing on how advocacy activists used framing strategies that reconciled international norms with Korean nationalism.

While explanations rooted in international norms provide compelling accounts for the growing global phenomenon of “unwanted” immigration among liberal states, they leave unanswered the question of how immigration policies and their outcomes change. For instance, the Korean government extended formal labor rights to migrant workers when it adopted the Employment Permit System (EPS) in 2004 which regulates foreign labor; however, the granting of labor rights did not result in substantive changes to immigration policies in that migrant workers continued to remain ineligible for long-term settlement (Lim 2003). Furthermore, despite its rhetorical nod to human rights, the Korean state has turned a blind eye to human rights violations committed by employers and business interests, especially when it relates to undocumented workers (Doucette and Prey 2010). The adoption of human rights norms thus cannot explain the persistence of Korea’s restrictive stance on immigration when it comes to migrant labor.

Furthermore, states may extend rights to immigrants irrespective of international conventions. Korea is not a signatory to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, yet it grants labor rights to migrant workers which many migrant labor-receiving countries do not. Rather than international norms, the efforts of the migrant worker advocacy movement which grew out of prior democratization and labor movements in Korea account for the extension of labor rights to migrant workers (N.-K. Kim 2012).

Finally, the ratification of international conventions is insufficient in guaranteeing the enforcement of international norms. For instance, Korea is signatory to the International Convention on the Status of Refugees, yet it accepts a very small number of

refugees. While the National Assembly passed the Refugee Act in 2011, making Korea the first country in East Asia to have a special law for refugees, it remains to be seen whether this legislation will result in sizable increases in the number of asylum seekers who are accepted as refugees.⁴ The Korean case demonstrates that states can be highly selective in terms of which international norms are adopted and that they can apply adopted norms discriminately.

The Developmental State Thesis: State-led Multiculturalism

A second body of scholarship on comparative immigration has focused on the role of domestic political institutions- the state, legislative courts and political parties- to account for countries' responses to immigrant incorporation (Bale 2008, Guiraudon 1999, Joppke 2010). State-centered approaches have explained multiculturalism in Korea as an expression of the state's developmental strategy which prioritizes continued economic growth and of Korea's desires to be acknowledged by the international community as an advanced country that respects human rights (N. Kim 2007). This perspective highlights how the multiculturalism campaign resembles prior developmental strategies adopted by Korean state planners, like modernization (*geundaehwa*) and globalization (*segryehwa*) which relied on state intervention and the mass mobilization of resources toward reaching these goals (S. Kim 2000). Characterizing multiculturalism in Korea as "state-led," sociologist Nora Kim (2007) emphasizes the Korean state's instrumental approach towards multiculturalism, one that treats multiculturalism as a utilitarian tool for the government to deal with the demographic crisis while attempting to preserve national identity. This approach provides important insights by pointing to the centralized, top-

⁴ The Refugee Act aims to shorten the period of time that asylum seekers must wait for decisions to be reached on their applications for refugee status.

down approach adopted by the Korean state to engineer the rapid expansion of multicultural family support programs.

However, there are several shortcomings to the argument. The first is that it presupposes the intentionality of the state in initiating the multiculturalism campaign. Studies of pro-migrant advocacy reveal that although the state has had a strong hand dictating the terms of incorporation, the demand for immigrant incorporation preceded state policies (E. Chung 2010a, Lim 2003). For instance, Korean women's organizations have demanded support programs for integrating marriage migrants since the early 2000s, several years before the institution of policies for marriage migrants in 2006 (Lee 2003). This perspective demonstrates that the state was reacting to demands made from below, rather than taking a proactive stance driven by calculated intent.

Second, the developmental state argument assumes the state's ability to control immigration. From the very beginning, immigration to Korea by migrant workers has increased in spite of state efforts to discourage their settlement. In the early 1990s, small to medium business owners in the face of severe and persistent labor shortages especially in so-called 3-D (dirty, dangerous, and difficult) sectors lobbied the Korean government to institute a system that would allow them to recruit foreign labor (Lim 2003). In response, the Korean government established the Industrial Technical Trainee Program in 1991 which would allow Korean businesses to hire foreign workers as "trainees." However, the number of undocumented workers continued to increase due to major human rights abuses and labor exploitation by the employers. In response to the grassroots pressure to address these problems, the Korean government implemented the Employment Permit System in 2004, which regulates the entry and exit of migrant workers and grants labor rights to them (Lee and Park 2005). In addition, the Korean

government has continued to conduct periodic crackdowns that have led to the forced deportations of thousands of undocumented migrant workers. Despite these efforts to control the size of the migrant population, the large numbers of undocumented migrants that in recent years have exceeded 100,000, challenge the notion of state control.

Third, the idea of a state-initiated multiculturalism is based on the tenuous assumption that the Korean state functions in much the same manner today as it did in the previous authoritarian era. Yet, scholarship on the Korean state post-democratization and economic liberalization indicates an unresolved debate over whether Korea remains a developmental state (Minns 2001, Y. Park 2011). Finally, the single-handed emphasis on the developmental state overlooks the grassroots push for multiculturalism from civil society organizations. As I discuss below, diverse civil society organizations, from pro-labor, Christian, to human rights organizations have promoted rights for different migrant groups *prior* to the institution of the state's multiculturalism campaign and they continue to remain involved after the institution of state policies.

Korean Civil Society as a Democratizing Force

A third vein in the scholarly literature centers on the role of civil society activists who have promoted immigrant rights at the grassroots level (E. Chung 2010b, J. Kim 2003, D. Kim 2011, N.-K. 2012, Moon 2000). According to this literature, Korean civil society's unique historical formation rooted in earlier democracy movements paved the way for the emergence of a pro-immigrant advocacy movement that has persistently pushed for the democratic inclusion of immigrants. Since staging a highly publicized sit-in front of Myeongdong Cathedral, a powerful symbol within the labor movement, migrant workers and civil society actors have sustained mobilization strategies that continue on the legacy of the Korean labor struggles which culminated in the 1970s and

1980s pro-democratization movement by adopting an antagonistic and oftentimes militant stance towards the state and business interests. Korean activist leaders within civil society who were engaged in prior labor and pro-democracy struggles were critical in raising the issue of migrant workers' rights and in securing institutional change in a short period of time. For instance, the efforts of civil society leaders were critical in the institution of the EPS which replaced the highly exploitative industrial trainee system and granted the three basic labor rights to migrant workers: the right to join unions, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike (D. Kim 2011, J. Kim 2003).⁵ Although the migrant worker advocacy movement has since experienced a split between more reform-minded and radical militant forces since the introduction of the EPS, civil society activists continue to be influential advocates of migrants' rights.

An explanation rooted in civil society provides important insights into the grassroots impetus behind the expansion of incremental rights for migrants; however, by focusing primarily on migrant workers, the majority of who are men, explanations rooted in civil society tend to overlook the highly gendered aspects of immigration politics in Korea. In part, the focus on male migrant workers reflects the "androcentric" tendency of civil society in Korea which has traditionally been dominated by men and often characterized as violent and militant (S. Moon 2002). Studies that emphasize civil society writ large and focus on labor-based struggles cannot provide a satisfactory explanation as to why marriage migrant women have been the main targets of immigrant incorporation. The gendered nature of immigrant incorporation thus demands a critical eye on women's

⁵ The EPS has been controversial among civil society activists. Although the EPS acknowledges labor rights for migrant workers, it also stipulates that migrant workers cannot stay and work for more than five years at a time. It also does not permit family unification and it did not allow workers the right to change their place of employment until reforms were introduced in 2007.

organizations and migrant women as central political actors who shape the politics of immigration. Rather than pro-labor activists, women's activists have been the primary advocates of migrant women's rights who serve as intermediaries between migrant women and state actors. While this study builds from the scholarship on civil society, it also seeks to shift the analytical lens away from the labor to the women's movement.

Women and Negotiated Citizenship

The contradictions of immigrant incorporation in Korea- between restrictive immigration policies and descent-based citizenship policies based on the principle of racial purity on the one hand, and a multiculturalism campaign that prioritizes the inclusion of multi-racial, multi-ethnic immigrant women on the other, are not driven by international norms, the developmental state, and a robust civil society. Although international norms may have had an influence on Korea's policies toward immigrants, they have not necessarily translated into liberal immigration policies. The Korean state has intervened heavily in promoting the multiculturalism campaign, but the integration policies were not pre-determined by developmental strategies; rather, they were ad-hoc responses to demands for change from the grassroots. Lastly, while activism on the part of various civil society actors has been critical to the expansion of migrants' rights, it was not the pro-labor, but women's organizations that were pivotal in fostering a multiculturalism campaign that has focused primarily on women and their children.

Treating citizenship as a negotiated relationship, I argue that the multiculturalism campaign reflects the unintended consequences of ongoing negotiations between state efforts to regulate women's access to rights and the attempts by women's organizations and migrant women to secure rights and expand their memberships. Building on the work of Daivia Stasiulis and Abigail Bakan (2003, 1997), I define citizenship as the

ongoing negotiations between state and non-state actors over rights and membership. In this framework, I identify three dimensions to citizenship: 1) access to rights, 2) a broadened conception of rights that includes human rights, and 3) membership in multiple collectivities. By including access to rights as a component of citizenship, I seek to shift the focus away from the granting or denial of formal rights to how rights are differentially accessed. In particular, the gendered division of labor which demands women's unpaid labor has been pivotal to how women access and exercise their rights.

Second, while dominant approaches that follow in the steps of T.H. Marshall have neatly divided rights into three categories: civil, political and social, the close association of human rights with women's rights in recent decades means that conceptualizations of women's citizenship should include a discussion of human rights. Third, this framework recognizes that citizenship does not constitute a single overarching membership, but multiple memberships not only in the state, but also civil society and the family. While I do not contest the importance of state membership, I seek to broaden the notion of citizenship to include the multiple memberships that individuals hold.

The argument can be further elaborated in two parts. First, states attempt to regulate how citizens and noncitizens access various types of rights and obligations not only as individuals but also as members of collectivities such as families and corporations. As such, policies like family policies which regulate individuals' access to rights through membership in the family invariably shape citizenship. An examination of family policies thus sheds light on how citizenship is shaped by state efforts to regulate women's access to rights through demands on their unpaid care and reproductive labor as wives and mothers. In the 1960s post-war era, the authoritarian regime in Korea formulated family planning programs aimed at incorporating women for the purposes of population control

(S. Moon 2005, Chung and Gupta 2007). The mass mobilization of women through state-controlled organizations that inculcated contraception as women's civic duty made population control not only possible but extremely effective in curbing population growth.

Despite the transition to democracy and the emergence of a women's movement, state attempts to regulate women's access to rights, including reproductive care, health and social rights through demands on their unpaid reproductive and care labor have demonstrated remarkable resilience. The re-formulation of family planning into family policies in the early 2000s represent continued state efforts to link women's citizenship to their roles as care providers who socially and biologically reproduce the nation vis-à-vis the family and the gendered division of labor. By mobilizing women as the primary care providers to families, the state continues to privatize the burden of care and welfare. Similarly, the state has sought to regulate marriage migrants' access to rights by incorporating them through the framework of multicultural family support policies.

The second part of the argument relates to the agency of Korean women's activists and migrant women in their efforts to negotiate rights and protections for migrant women. During the 1970s, women mobilized on behalf of women factory workers who faced exploitative working conditions, while in the 1980s women's activists organized against violence inflicted upon women by the authoritarian state in the name of national security. Since the transition to democracy in 1987, women's organizations have continued to push for gender equality and greater rights for women. These efforts culminated in legislative and institutional changes such as the Equal Employment Act in 1985, the establishment of gender quotas that increased women's political representation in 2000, and the creation of a government agency dedicated to gender equality in 2001. Integral to the women's movement has been the push for women's rights as human rights

where women's organizations have increasingly adopted the language of human rights to mobilize around the protection of women's rights, such as sexual and domestic violence, and trafficking.

During this period of growth and diversification in the women's movement, Korea's demographic landscape changed dramatically due to the influx of migrant workers and brides. From 2000 to 2010, the foreign resident population in Korea grew from 210,248 to 918,917, representing more than a four-fold increase over the decade (NSO 2010). In 2007, the total foreign population including short-term residents exceeded one million. Moreover, the greater social, cultural and political impact of these demographic changes came from marriage migrants, women mostly from China and Vietnam married to Korean men who have transformed the ethnic and racial composition of families and entire rural communities. For instance, the National Statistics Office (NSO) reported in 2006 that over 40 percent of Korean men working in agriculture or fisheries were married to a foreign bride (NSO 2006). As they came to comprise the majority of newly naturalized Korean citizens, marriage migrants have represented a direct challenge to mono-cultural conceptualizations of citizenship and nationality based on ideologies of ethnic homogeneity and racial purity (Chung and Kim 2012).

Meanwhile, the emergence of marriage migrants as the new victims of patriarchy whose human rights are at risk invigorated Korean women's organizations to mobilize around rights and protections for migrant women beginning in the early 2000s. During this time, women's organizations benefited from their growing cooperative relations with two successive progressive governments to come to power, first with the Kim Dae Jung (1998-2003) and later with the Roh Moo-Hyun (2003-2008) government, which were responsive to demands from grassroots women's organizations. Continuing pressures

from the women's organizations led to incremental reforms aimed at protecting migrant women's rights: changes to immigration procedures and nationality law (2005), legislation to regulate the marriage brokerage industry (2007), and policies to support multicultural families (2008), which aim to provide a more secure legal status, social provisions, and welfare benefits to marriage migrants.

For women's organizations, however, bargaining with the state proved to be a double-edged sword (S. and K. Kim 2014). On the one hand, it increased public support programs for women, including educational, counseling, and welfare programs, and created opportunities for migrant women to negotiate the terms of their incorporation. On the other hand, close partnerships with the state in providing support services for migrant women have prompted women's organizations to shift their focus from advocacy to service provisions. The unintended consequence of these engagements with the state is that women's organizations have become implicated in state efforts to incorporate marriage migrants as wives and mothers which work to reinforce, not challenge patriarchal ideals of family and womanhood.

By treating citizenship as an ongoing negotiation of rights and membership, this study highlights the contradictions of citizenship for women. Because it constitutes a dynamic process that entails not only status but also participation and human agency, citizenship holds the possibility of transformative social change, such as mitigating inequalities and social conflicts. On the other hand, citizenship rests on specific articulations and notions of nationhood that can also work to reinforce existing gender, class, and racial hierarchies in spite of attempts to challenge them. Thus, citizenship entails both emancipatory potential that holds the promise of empowerment and

unintended consequences that work to perpetuate various gender, class, and racial inequalities.

Second, this study provides valuable insights on the relationship between gender and immigrant incorporation. While studies of migration have brought to light the various ways that migration, citizenship and gender intersect, there has been a noted absence of studies that focus on how gender politics shape patterns of immigrant incorporation (Abraham 2010, Tastsoglou 2006). By situating women as the main actors of analysis, I demonstrate how incorporation is the mutually constituted relationship between the receiving society and immigrants, but also a particular type of *gendered* immigrant. Although immigrant incorporation is often regarded as a normative ideal that denotes inclusion and empowerment within the host society, incorporation may not be ideal for women when it is premised on gender inequality and the fulfillment of gender roles that perpetuate women's subordinated and unequal status. This study sheds light on immigrant incorporation as an uneven and unpredictable process that reinforces gender inequalities even as it extends citizenship rights to immigrant women.

Lastly, this study situates Korea's multiculturalism campaign as an attempt to balance the pressures for democratic inclusion, including gender equality on the one hand and the need to address demographic challenges on the other hand. Despite adhering to national ideologies that espouses racial purity and ethnic homogeneity, the Korean government no longer finds it tenable to deny rights to non-citizens due to domestic as well as mounting international pressures to promote democratic inclusion. Furthermore, the exigencies of the rapid demographic decline, an unforeseen outgrowth of accelerated economic and political development, have prompted a response that links immigrant incorporation to population concerns. While multiculturalism in Korea resembles the

experiences of other countries faced with the challenge of integrating diverse immigrants into their societies amid demographic challenges, it is also unique in that the “solution” to the demographic challenge has focused disproportionately on women.

Korea as a Country of Immigration

Korea parallels other countries of immigration in several important ways. First, like Spain, Italy, and Portugal, Korea has recently transitioned from being an emigrant-sending to an immigrant-receiving country (Hollifield, Martin and Orrenius 2014). In these countries, increased immigration flows have challenged existing policies and institutions as the host states and societies are pressed to devise innovative ways to manage diversity and accommodate new members. Pressures for change have also prompted a renewed reflection upon traditional understandings of national identity. Because of their lack of prior experience with immigration, these countries have employed contradictory and anomalous policies that demonstrate a grappling with the unprecedented challenges posed by new immigrant populations. In other words, such countries are at a crossroads in deciding how they will integrate immigrants and it remains to be seen whether they will be able to avoid substantial social conflict and political instability in the process.

Second, like other advanced industrial nations, Korea has been experiencing increased immigration flows over the past few decades alongside declining birth rates and rapidly aging populations. Along with countries like Japan, Germany, and Italy, downward demographic pressures complicate Korea’s response to immigration where perceptions of immigration are inevitably colored by growing national anxieties due to population decline. While states are reluctant to admit that immigration could be part of a solution to resolving population woes, they are increasingly pressured by business

interests and employers to continue to recruit migrant labor to fulfill labor shortages, especially in labor intense sectors and in care-giving to the young and elderly. Responses to immigration also stem from the recognition that the inability to address demographic concerns bodes ill for future development and growth.

Finally, Korea resembles other countries in that it has extended benefits and rights to immigrants and non-citizens, such as partial political rights to permanent residents, in spite of a reluctance to accept large-scale immigration. Like other countries of immigration, Korea now recognizes permanent residency and grants quasi-citizenship rights to permanent residents (D. Seol 2012). Moreover, it has revised naturalization procedures which make it easier for targeted categories of foreign residents, including high-skilled professionals, overseas Koreans (or *dongpo*), and marriage migrants to naturalize. These measures reflect what Christian Joppke (2005) termed a growing “de-ethnicization” of citizenship, where citizenship is no longer strictly defined by the principle of *jus sanguinis*, but by *jus soli* and other factors unrelated to ethnicity that facilitate access to citizenship. In short, the boundaries of state membership are no longer defined primarily by ethnicity and descent, but other considerations, such as liberal norms and demographic concerns.

At the same time, a number of differences stand out in terms of the patterns of immigrant incorporation in Korea. Immigration in Korea is notable in that the majority of the migrant population is composed of co-ethnics with foreign nationality: ethnic Koreans primarily from China and to a much lesser extent from the former Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (Seol and Skrentny 2009). Because the majority of migrants are co-ethnics, the racial differences between migrant and non-migrant populations are less prominent compared to other immigrant-receiving countries, even

though distinct linguistic and cultural differences do exist. Even among non-ethnic migrants, most originate from within the Asian continent. Because many of these migrants come from a shared cultural background such as Confucianism, as in the case of the Vietnamese and Han Chinese, the cultural differences between citizens and immigrants are relatively less striking than in countries where this is not the case.

Second, unlike European countries, refugees and asylum seekers compose only a small percentage of immigrants to Korea. In Europe, refugees and asylum seekers from the Middle East and Africa compose a majority of present-day immigrants. Long criticized by the international community for its unwillingness to accept refugees, the Korean government made a concerted effort to accept more refugees by passing the Act on the Status and Treatment of Refugees in 2011. The number of refugees and asylum seekers that Korea currently accepts however pales in comparison to that of Western countries. Instead of refugees, Korea has accepted the inflow of defectors from North Korea, whose numbers have exceeded 25,000 in recent years (B. Chung 2008). Upon arrival, these defectors not only automatically acquire South Korean citizenship, but they receive resettlement subsidies and a variety of other support services from the Korean government to help them adjust to life in the South.⁶ As de-facto citizens, defectors from the North are not considered immigrants but a special category of “new settlers.”

Finally, Korea’s multiculturalism campaign has not prompted substantial changes to exclusionary and restrictive policies; rather, the campaign for multiculturalism represents an anomaly to closed-door immigration and descent-based citizenship policies.

⁶ North Koreans are not considered immigrants in the traditional sense. Because the South Korean government considers itself the only legitimate state of the peninsula, North Koreans are considered de-facto citizens upon arrival. Yet, the experiences of North Korean defectors in the South reveal that they often experience the same kind of cultural maladjustment and social isolation as other migrants in Korea.

Through a system of tight state regulation that includes periodic crackdowns, detentions, and forced deportations, the Korean government makes it rather difficult for low-skilled migrant workers to remain in Korea for the long-term. Given the persistent numbers of undocumented migrants, many scholars have raised doubts as to the long-term sustainability of this guest worker system in lieu of a liberalized immigration policy (T. Lim 2012, A. Kim 2009). Yet, it remains to be seen whether Korea will join the ranks of other immigrant-receiving countries to allow the settlement of migrant workers, or whether it will continue to rely on strong-handed measures to maintain restrictive and exclusionary policies.

Methodology

This dissertation adopts a multi-method qualitative approach that draws from archival research, in-depth personal interviews, and participant observation. The purpose of this dissertation is to address the following questions: what explains the disjuncture between Korea's restrictive immigration and descent-based citizenship policies and the promotion of a multiculturalism campaign that seeks to incorporate multi-ethnic, multi-racial immigrants? Furthermore, why has this multiculturalism campaign focused exclusively on women? In order to reconstruct the historical and contextual background, I consulted a wide range of archival materials consisting of statistical records, policy plans, legislation, and media sources. Second, personal interviews with key actors from civil society, the central and local governments, and grassroots migrant communities allowed me to understand how the stories, aspirations and frustrations of individuals came to impact their decisions and actions. Third, focused participant observation gathered while interacting with Korean activists and migrant women provided firsthand insights that could not be uncovered from archival materials and interviews alone.

For secondary sources, I relied on government documents published in Korean, such as statistical reports from the Korea Immigration Service (KIS), policy statements from various government ministries and presidential committees, and legislative meeting records from the National Assembly from 2000 to the present. These materials were gathered through visits to the library at Yonsei University (where I was affiliated as a Fulbright researcher), the National Library of Korea, and National Assembly Library as well as through access to digital academic databases, such as the Research Information Service System (RISS). I also referenced major print and digital news media publications in both English and Korean. Whenever possible, I referenced newspaper publications from a range of different political affiliations, such as the *Chosun Ilbo*, *JoongAngDaily*, *Donga Ilbo*, *OhMyNews*, and *Hankyoreh* in Korean and the *Korea Herald* and *Korea Times* in English.

The ethnographic data stems out of fourteen months of field research conducted in the Seoul-Gyeonggi metropolitan area (including the commuter cities of Ansan, Guri, Goyang, and Ilsan) in Korea from September 2011 to November 2012. During this time, I collected primary documents, including printed pamphlets and brochures, budget reports, project summaries, informal surveys, and newsletters from governmental and voluntary organizations, such as migrant women's support organizations and multicultural family support centers. Furthermore, I conducted participant observation in two major non-profit voluntary organizations for migrant women: the Korean Women Migrants Human Rights Center (*Han'guk Iju Yŏsŏng In'gwŏn Sent'ŏ*, or the Center) and the Migrant Women Human Rights Forum (*Iju Yŏsŏng In'gwŏn P'orŏm*, or Forum), both based in Seoul.

A leading human rights organization for migrant women since 2001, the Center served as my first point of contact during a preliminary research trip in the summer of

2010 when I worked as a part-time intern from the beginning of July to the end of August. From September 2011 to September 2012, I voluntarily taught English to two Vietnamese migrant women activists. They desired to learn English because they wanted to understand the borrowed English terms that Koreans increasingly utilize in their daily speech. I met with the migrant women after the end of their work hours twice a week for one hour after which we always went out for dinner. I was also part of a migrant women study group composed of those who were interested in reading and discussing academic works on migration written in Korean. Led by a Korean activist at the Center, the study group met once a week from November 2011 to March 2012. From April 2012 to June 2012, I participated in the Center's training program for domestic violence counselors where I received 100 hours of training alongside twenty-two other migrant and Korean activists. While in the field, I routinely kept a written journal of my observations, recording my thoughts, interactions, and conversations with migrant women and Korean activists.

The other organization that I participated regularly as an active member was the Migrant Women Human Rights Forum which is a scholar-activist organization led by Kim Young-ock and Kim Jung-sun, two prominent university lecturers in women's studies. The Forum is an organization that aims to further scholarship on migrant women through workshops, seminars, and publications. I was invited to join the organization by my host professor Kim Hyun-Mee from the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Yonsei University. From January 2012 to November 2014, I regularly attended the monthly seminar meetings and workshops and I collaborated with the other members in putting together an edited volume on migrant women in Korea which was published in

March 2013. I contributed a chapter written in Korean on the topic of regularizing illegal migrant status in Korea.

Furthermore, I conducted personal interviews with fifty-one Korean activists, migrant women, scholars, journalists, local and national politicians, and policy researchers based in Seoul and around the country. I was able to secure these interviews through introductions from the contacts I established through my participation in the two migrant women's organizations and through my affiliation with Yonsei University. While I was based primarily in Seoul, I conducted short-term research trips to interview activists and policymakers in Gyeonggi province in Ilsan, Goyang, Ansan, and Guri cities. Of all the provinces in Korea, Gyeonggi province which surrounds the capital city of Seoul has the highest concentration of both marriage migrant residents and migrant workers. Through introductions, I was also able to visit multicultural family support centers and migrant support organizations on Jeju Island and in Gochang County, North Jeolla Province, where I interviewed the leaders and staff members of the organizations.

My interviews and field research targeted Korean women activists and organizations and their role in shaping Korean immigration and gender politics. I identified these organizations with the guidance of leading scholars and activists on marriage migration. I conducted all my interviews in person, using open-ended but semi-structured questions that aimed to elicit interviewees' responses to three main sets of questions: a) the interviewees' career background and identity as an activist for migrant women; b) their primary responsibilities and roles within their affiliated organizations; c) their opinions and evaluations of government policies and programs for migrant women and multicultural families. All interviews were conducted in Korean and ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of three hours. All translations and transcriptions of the

interviews from Korean into English are mine. Throughout the dissertation, I use the personal names of only those who gave me their prior consent; the rest have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Organization of the Chapters

This dissertation examines the relationship between women and the state by analyzing the interactions between the state and women's organizations. The empirical chapters are structured around the three central actors who are the focus of this study: 1) the state and its institutions, 2) women's movement organizations, and 3) migrant women. In Chapter Two, I present the theoretical framework. First, I review the dominant approaches to citizenship and discuss the contributions of feminist theorists and recent studies that examine the intersections of gender, migration and citizenship. I then propose a framework that conceptualizes citizenship along three dimensions: access to rights, human rights, and multiple memberships. Central to this framework is the agency of women in shaping their citizenship which is not pre-determined and imposed upon them as passive subjects, but negotiated and re-negotiated by organized groups of women, both citizens and non-citizens, who contest the terms and conditions of their incorporation.

Chapter Three examines how the state has regulated women's access to rights first through family planning and later through family policies by incorporating women as the primary providers of care and reproductive labor for families. National anxiety concerning the impact of population on economic growth fueled by the exigencies of national security and anti-Communism resulted in the implementation of family planning programs from the 1960s throughout the 1990s. The state thus incorporated women into the nation by mass mobilizing them for the purposes of monitoring their contraceptive practices and mass sterilizations. Yet three decades later, the successful reining in of the

population growth demanded state efforts to reverse low fertility rates that presently pose demographic challenges. Resembling previous efforts to incorporate Korean women, the state instituted family policies in 2004 which aims to incorporate Korean and migrant women as primary care providers to families by regulating their access to social rights. These policies have mobilized Korean women's organizations to educate and provide care to migrant women so that they become "proper" wives and mothers who provide care labor and thereby socially and biologically reproduce Korean families.

In Chapter Four, I trace the origins and evolution of the movement for migrant women to prior campaigns within the broader women's movement to secure human rights. The influx of marriage migrants presented an opportunity for women's organizations to renew their negotiations with the state for the expansion of rights and protections for women, especially for victims of gender violence and trafficking. While a small but closely knit coalition of advocacy organizations pushed for policies that would protect migrant women from human rights abuses, the policies that were passed ultimately fell short of their aims by prioritizing educational and welfare service provisions. Based on my examination of the women's human rights movement, I argue that claiming human rights for women has distinct consequences or costs that ultimately reproduce rather than undermine patriarchy. As a result, women's organizations have found themselves trapped in the contradictory position of implementing policies that promote what they have long opposed: patriarchal ideals of Korean womanhood and family.

Chapter Five explores the different strategies by which migrant women are negotiating their different memberships through the active support of women's organizations. I focus on three approaches to negotiating membership by migrant women: 1) integration into the labor market, 2) civic activism, and 3) political engagement. While

the multiculturalism campaign has provided opportunities for migrant women to negotiate their memberships, it rests on gender inequality because it roots migrant women's access to rights and citizenship through their unpaid labor as mothers and wives who provide care to families. Ultimately, citizenship presents a paradox for migrant women, one that both facilitates and hinders their political empowerment.

The concluding chapter revisits the central questions posed in the dissertation: why has Korea prioritized immigrant incorporation despite national ideologies based on racial purity and ethnic homogeneity? Why has Korea's multiculturalism campaign focused exclusively on marriage migrant women? More broadly, how does gender shape immigrant incorporation? I summarize my main points and link my empirical discussion to the theoretical framework I proposed earlier. Finally, I discuss the comparative implications and suggest future avenues for research that will further understandings on the connections between gender, immigrant incorporation and democratic citizenship.

CHAPTER TWO

Citizenship as a Negotiated Relationship

Over the past two decades, the increased migration flows of women on a global scale and the entry of diverse groups of women into new geographic spaces and communities have prompted growing attention to the intersections between citizenship, migration and gender (Anthias 2013, Tastsoglou 2006, Abraham 2010, Willis and Yeoh 2000). By situating gender as a central focus of analysis, these studies have sought to illuminate the agency exercised by diverse groups of migrant women, in contrast to dominant portrayals that regard them as powerless and disempowered. Furthermore, they have brought to light how citizenship and immigrant incorporation are gendered processes that can work to both reinforce and mitigate gender inequalities.

In this chapter, I build upon existing scholarship to introduce a theoretical framework for citizenship as a negotiated relationship. The first section briefly discusses the theoretical contributions of T.H. Marshall (1950) as a departure point for feminist approaches in citizenship. In the following section, I survey the major works on citizenship that have grappled with the question of gender. The third section examines three dominant scholarly approaches to citizenship, gender, and migration. I then introduce my framework which highlights three dimensions of citizenship: a) the regulation of access to rights through the gendered division of labor, b) the inclusion of human rights as the basis of citizenship rights, and c) multiple memberships that individuals hold.

T.H. Marshall as Point of Departure

In his well-known treatise *Citizenship and Social Class*, T.H. Marshall (1950: 28-9) famously defined citizenship as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a

community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed.” Marshall’s study sought to account for the development of social citizenship in Great Britain, which he characterized as an evolutionary progression of different sets of rights. In the 18th century, the emergence of a bourgeoisie that demanded liberty, the freedom of speech, and rights to a fair trial resulted in the rise of civil rights defended by a system of courts. As the working class waged struggles for political equality and access within the political process in the 19th century, citizenship gained another dimension: political rights. In the 20th century, social rights emerged as a basis of claims to welfare and social security. This progression of rights coincided with the rise of capitalism which as a system of inequality has increasingly been at “war” with citizenship (Marshall 1950). Specifically, Marshall was referring to the contradictions between formal political equality and the persistence of widespread social and economic inequalities associated with modern-day capitalism.

When it comes to gender however, Marshall’s account of citizenship glaringly overlooked how gender has intersected with class to influence the development of social rights and the welfare state (Siim 2000, Bock 1992, Orloff 1993). For instance, in most European welfare states, the gendered division of labor which distinguished between waged and unpaid labor lay at the heart of the development of welfare systems. The gendered division of labor as the basis of the capitalist welfare system raises important questions about how the meanings and the chronology of civil, political and social rights are influenced by gender (Orloff, 1993). Additionally, the evolutionary treatment of rights fails to recognize that women on the whole were generally granted citizenship rights later than men and in a different order from them. Marshall situated the development of political rights in Britain to the 19th century, but it was not until the 20th

century that women in Britain attained full suffrage. Furthermore, in many cases, women often gained social rights as mothers before they obtained the right to vote (Bock 1992).

Despite these criticisms however, feminists have been reluctant to abandon Marshall's framework. For one, feminist scholar Sylvia Walby (1994: 381) argues that Marshall's long historical approach to citizenship left open the possibility of discussing degrees of citizenship obtained by different groups at different times. This disaggregated treatment of citizenship recognizes the uneven and differentiated progression by which citizenship developed in different contexts. More importantly, Nira Yuval-Davis attributes Marshall's broad definition of citizenship as opening up opportunities for feminists to discuss women's different memberships. Yuval-Davis (1997b: 70) argues that Marshall's definition "raises the possibility of multi-tier citizenship in both sub and supra-state collectivities as well as the question of the relationships of these collectivities to the state." Only by recognizing citizenship as a multi-tier construct which recognizes citizens as members of different communities, rather than primarily that of states, can we begin to account for the different positioning of women in different communities. Marshall's study thus inspired new theory and research about citizenship, including critical feminist analyses (Siim 2000).

Feminist Approaches to Citizenship

One of the central questions that have occupied feminists is how to reconcile women's duties in the private sphere with a more egalitarian form of politics in the public realm. From one end of the spectrum, "maternalists" such as Jean Elshtain (1981) and Sara Ruddick (1990) challenged the "matriphobia" of the feminist movement and attempted to restructure the private and public spheres by focusing on the positive aspects

of motherhood and the private sphere.⁷ Elshtain (1983:183) insists that “the family remains the locus of the deepest and most resonant human ties,” in an attempt to reconstruct the moral primacy of the private sphere. In contrast to Marxist feminists who conflate citizenship with labor, class struggle and socialist revolution, these maternal feminists aim for women’s liberation by reconstructing the private sphere as a site of women’s liberation, rather than of their oppression. Instead of a negative, the gendered division of work within the family serves as a positive basis for the forging of women’s political identities and for their integration into politics.

Meanwhile, Carol Pateman (1988b) finds the divisions between the private and public spheres irreconcilable. Rather than reclaim the moral superiority of the private sphere, a more egalitarian form of politics for women stems from a “sexually differentiated citizenship” that distinguishes between the private and public spheres. The source of the problem for Pateman is that women cannot obtain full citizenship as women. Referring to this as “Wollstonecraft’s dilemma,” Pateman points out that women are torn between the demand for a gender-neutral idea of citizenship and a citizenship that can express their specific concerns in their capacities as women. According to Pateman (1988a: 252), “either women become (like) men, and so full citizens, or they continue at women’s work, which is of no value for citizenship.”

This dilemma stems from the fact that the social contract is based on an unspoken fraternity or brotherhood of men, which has served to privilege men and subordinate women through a tacit sexual contract that underlies the social contract. Pateman argues

⁷Sara Ruddick brought important insights into maternal thinking as a learning process that underlies an ethics of maternal care. Ruddick is often misunderstood as portraying maternal caring as an instinctive part of the female psyche. Rather, she treats maternal thinking as a social and cultural construction, an ability that is acquired through a learning process that has historically been assigned to women (O’Reilly and Bizzini, 2009:9).

that there are two reasons why the sexual contract has not been discussed by theorists: first, patriarchy tends to be interpreted as paternal rule rather than a 'political right' that originates in male sex-right. The second reason for the silence is that attention has been primarily directed at the public sphere, where the private sphere has more or less been neglected. Because of their relegation to the private sphere through the sexual contract, it is impossible for women to obtain full citizenship as women. As a response to the Wollstonecraft dilemma, Pateman proposes a 'sexually differentiated' citizenship that recognizes the specificity of womanhood within a context of civil equality.

Anne Phillips (1991) seeks a middle ground between the glorification of the private sphere by Elshtain and its complete separation from the public sphere as proposed by Pateman. She critiques the three models of democracy: traditional liberalism, participatory democracy and civic republicanism as models that have inadequately addressed feminist concerns. By focusing on abstract individualism, traditional liberalism tends to ignore the differences and inequalities between men and women. While participatory democracy demands significant time and energy and thereby overlooks the realities of women's lives, civic republicanism tends to overlook the distinctive concerns of traditionally subordinate groups and maintains distinctions between the public and private realms (Phillips 1991:26-33).

Despite its flaws, Phillips argues that liberal democracy, based on universal suffrage and representation, offers the best promise for gender-equal democratic representation. It does so in two ways: first by developing representative mechanisms that explicitly acknowledge gender difference and inequality. Second and perhaps more importantly, liberal democracy permits the re-ordering of the relationship between the public and private spheres. One of the representative mechanisms that Phillips suggests is

affirmative action in the form of a quota for women candidates in the electoral system.

Turning to the empirical example of Nordic democracies, Phillips (1991:130) argues that greater representation ultimately translates into greater inclusion for women, even though it requires a long period of time for the transformation to fully take place.

These varied engagements in democratic theory constitute feminists' attempt to re-conceptualize citizenship which has been defined on the basis of a male norm. While Elshtain seeks to find the source of women's empowerment from within the private sphere of the family, Pateman suggests a sexually differentiated citizenship that simultaneously recognizes women as different but equal. Anne Phillips calls for a rethinking of how to include women through mechanisms of representation by engendering democracy itself. Although these contributions acknowledge the differences between men and women, by treating the category of woman as universal, they leave unanswered how different groups of women are to be incorporated as citizens. For instance, Elshtain insists on a public realm that addresses women as mothers and thereby reshapes the private realm, but as many of her critics point out, this assumes that motherhood is an ideal cherished by *all* women (Dietz 1985).⁸ Furthermore, critics have raised the question of whether maternal thinking in fact reifies the differences and inequalities between men and women.

Other theorists have sought to conceptualize a citizenship that recognizes difference and promotes equality among different groups of women. Two prominent contributions have suggested a citizenship based on a feminist solidarity rooted in

⁸ Mary Dietz (1985:20) writes that "women are not uniquely identified by maternal thinking, nor does maternal thinking necessarily promote the kind of democratic politics social feminism purports to foster. Accordingly, I contend that feminism can only succeed in its political mission by encouraging democratic practices and by nurturing the reality of women, in large part, as citizens."

difference. The first is Nira Yuval-Davis's (1997b) work, *Gender and Nation*, which highlights how specific notions of manhood and womanhood have constructed nationhood as well as citizenship. According to Yuval-Davis (1997b: 24), "[w]omen have tended to be differentially regulated to men in nationality, immigration and refugee legislation, often being constructed as dependent on their family men and expected to follow them and live where they do." Unlike liberal definitions of citizenship which treats the differences of class, ethnicity, gender, as irrelevant to their status as citizens, Yuval-Davis (1997b:75) argues that citizenship needs to be examined from a perspective that would include "the different positioning of different states as well as the different positioning of individuals and groupings within states." By embedding the individual in different social relations and communities, she attempts to sever the exclusive association of citizenship with the nation-state. In other words, she attempts to re-conceptualize citizenship to pay heed to how the specific location of people in society mediates the construction of their citizenship as 'different' and thus determines their access to entitlements and their capacity to exercise independent agency (Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999:5). For Yuval-Davis, citizenship is a "multi-tier" construct and one that applies to people's membership in a variety of collectivities. By treating citizenship as multi-tiered, it is possible to see how each tier is associated with different rights and duties that women must negotiate for a more gender equal membership.

As feminist practice, Yuval Davis (1997b) advocates a "transversal perspective," a form of coalition politics whereby the differences among women are recognized and given a voice. Transversal politics is not based on specific identities but in terms of what a community seeks to achieve; furthermore, it is based on continuous dialogue and the ability to shift perspectives in order to put oneself in a situation of exchange with women

who have different memberships and identities. According to Yuval-Davis (1997b: 130), transversal politics revolves around two central principles: the first is that the shifting (of perspectives) should not involve the loss of one's own rooting (i.e. identity and membership) and set of values. Second, the process of shifting should not homogenize the 'other,' but recognize that members within a different group hold different positions and viewpoints. Thus, Yuval-Davis offers transversal politics as a path to a less sexist, less racist and a more democratic society.

While Yuval Davis aims for an expanded notion of citizenship based on multiple tiers of membership, Ruth Lister (1997a, 1997b) deconstructs and provides a synthesis of existing traditions: traditional liberalism and civic republicanism. For Lister (1997b: 195-6), citizenship is “understood as both a status, carrying a set of rights including social and reproductive rights and a *practice*, involving political participation broadly defined so as to include the kind of informal politics in which women are more likely to engage.” This definition of citizenship rejects the “false universalism” of traditional citizenship theory that is unable to appreciate diversity, recognize difference, and overlooks the exclusion of groups who do not conform to the norm of the White, able-bodied, heterosexual male (Ibid: 199). While Lister critiques liberal universalism, she does not reject universalism entirely, because universalism embodies an “emancipatory potential” in that it serves to function as a standard by which “the denial of full and genuine citizenship to women and minority groups can be measured and claims for inclusion can be directed” (Vogel 1988: 157, Lister 1997b: 89).⁹ Thus, by synthesizing traditional approaches toward citizenship,

⁹ Ursula Vogel (1988) argues for the need for universal concepts as a standard by which to reveal underlying patterns of domination and inequality. She writes, “On what grounds could a critical analysis reveal the underlying pattern of domination even in the benevolent features of sex-guardianship if one were

Lister seeks to promote women's participation and representation in a more democratic form of politics. By promoting a differentiated universalism, Lister has forcefully argued that it is possible to conceive of a women-friendly citizenship as theory and as praxis. Similar to Yuval-Davis's notion of transversal politics, differentiated universalism is about the search for a politics of solidarity rooted in difference. Through the framework of differentiated universalism, Lister is able to reformulate citizenship to give full recognition to the different and shifting identities that women simultaneously hold.

Yuval-Davis and Lister both seek to bring women into discussions of citizenship and to include women in all their diversity, including immigrant women. In doing so, they are responding to the calls of feminist philosophers like Uma Narayan (1997: 63), who has critiqued feminist literature on citizenship for being "less attuned to the fact that category of citizenship itself can function to marginalize and occlude the interests and problems faced by non-citizen residents." Yuval-Davis and Lister's approaches to citizenship consider the political struggles at the level of the state as well as in sub-national and transnational communities. In both approaches, the realization of a truly feminist citizenship is one that recognizes not only women but different groups of people and their different social, political and economic positionings. Citizenship as feminist praxis hence requires that diverse groups of women do their share to transform citizenship through political activism and participation. By recognizing and taking seriously differences among women, these critical perspectives on citizenship have paved the way for discussions on gender, migration and citizenship.

to dismiss the applicability of those universal concepts associated with the principle of equal rights? Its emancipator potential cannot be disconnected from the claim to universality (Vogel, 1988: 157)."

The Intersections of Migration, Gender and Citizenship

Contemporary scholarship on the “feminization of migration” has highlighted how gender inequalities facilitate and hinder patterns of migration (Sharpe 2001, Anthias, Kontos and Morokvasic-Muller 2013, Piper and Roces 2003). For one, women’s marital status can facilitate migration, but it does so on the basis of their position as dependents of men whose legal status and rights are not individually granted but vis-à-vis their relationship to men. When their legal status is dependent on their relations with men, migration can thus serve to perpetuate women’s subordinated and unequal status. On the other hand, migration can open up opportunities for women not only for economic and social advancement but for negotiating a more empowered status for instance, when they become the main breadwinners for their households through migration and the remittances they send (Parrenas 2001b).

Inequalities between men and women, but also between different groups of women have shaped the migration patterns of women along class, racial and ethnic lines. As maids, housekeepers, and caregivers, migrant women constitute a global labor force that is often overlooked as cheap, informal and expendable. Most if not all economies of the developed world, including welfare states, depends on the reproductive and care labor provided by these women to sustain the productive labor force. For instance, dual-earner upper and middle class families in the U.S. and Canada, the Middle East, and Hong Kong, have increasingly relied on the care labor of domestic workers to look after their households and to care for children and the elderly (Stasiulis and Bakan 1997, Fernandez 2014, Triandafyllidou 2013). The global transferring of caregiving labor from women in developed countries to women in developing countries sustains what sociologist Rhacel Parrenas (2001a: 78) has called the “hierarchy of womanhood.” In her study of Filipina

domestic workers, Parrenas (2001a: 78) argues that the hierarchy of womanhood is a distinct form of the transnational division of labor that links women across race, class and nation in an interdependent and hierarchal relationship.

The denial of formal citizenship and rights however, has not prevented immigrant women from contesting and challenging the meanings and practices of citizenship at the local, national and transnational levels. Contrary to the notion that women are forced into migration by global structures of patriarchy, this perspective highlights how migration can provide opportunities for women to challenge patriarchy. As Dobrowolsky and Tastsoglou (2006: 6) argue, “[i]mmigrant women are complex subjects whose autonomous action and agency even under the most dire circumstances should not be underplayed.” Through political engagement, ranging from rights-based movements to everyday struggles to negotiate their rights, immigrant women seek to define and re-define the boundaries of citizenship. Although there is no guarantee that waging such struggles will necessarily result in progress, women undertake costly personal and collective sacrifices in order to strive for change that will better their lives. In short, as Abraham (2010:12-13) and others argue, citizenship is a fluid and dynamic process of agency, contestation and resistance.

One of the central questions that the growing scholarship on citizenship, women and migration seeks to address is: how do migrant women negotiate rights in host societies that are otherwise reluctant to extend rights to them? Based on analyses of how immigrant women seek to transform citizenship, I identify three broad overlapping approaches to citizenship: as contentious claims-making, as a cultural process of subject-making, and as a strategic tool of resistance. The first approach explains the extension of rights to migrant women as a function of the claims made by immigrants and their

support organizations. The second approach is focused on the construction of migrant women as racialized and gendered subjects who are included and excluded based on these subjectivities. Lastly, the third approach understands the rights of migrant women as a strategy that is negotiated within unequal relations of power between countries and within families.

Contentious Politics Approaches: Citizenship as Claims-Making

In her analysis of South Asian immigrant communities in the U.S., sociologist Monisha Das Gupta (2006), focuses on the various claims made by South Asian migrants, such as married women, queers and taxi drivers. Departing from the typical narrative of struggles by immigrant minorities to demand full citizenship rights, Das Gupta develops the concept of “transnational complex of rights,” where rights are mobile and not rooted in national membership. Rather than organize for citizenship status, Das Gupta brings to light how activists have preferred to explore access to rights distinct from formal citizenship. In this way, the “transnational complex of rights” functions to pry apart the taken-for-granted connection between citizenship and rights (Das Gupta 2006:19) . She argues that the struggles that these “unruly immigrants” wage are specific to their social location and class status. For instance, Das Gupta highlights the distinct ways by which South Asian women’s organizations have re-conceptualized domestic violence to reflect immigrant women’s experiences and their particular predicaments, and how they have articulated rights for immigrant women without the benefit of claiming citizenship. In doing so, Das Gupta claims that these organizations have expanded notions of feminism in the U.S., and she demonstrates that immigrants make claims such as the basic right to safety, work, and mobility across borders, rather than claims for citizenship.

Catherine Raissiguier (2010) in her examination of immigration in contemporary France, focuses on how women in the *sans-papiers* movement have appropriated and thereby transformed notions of democracy, citizenship, and republican belonging. Mostly from former French colonies in sub-Saharan Africa, the *sans-papiers* refer to refugees and immigrants many of whom had entered legally as family members of French citizens but were rendered illegal by immigration laws that have become increasingly more restrictive since the mid-1970s.¹⁰ Raissiguier specifically points to the dual processes of foregrounding and erasure of African immigrant women within the movement as a reflection of the intersections of race and gender in the construction of the immigration “problem” in France. Immigrant women occupy a unique social location where discursive and material conditions have constructed immigrant women as those without subjectivity, or “impossible subjects.”

Yet, immigrant women have creatively organized around a notion and identity of “lack” that allows them to make claims that cannot easily be dismissed by the French state. By organizing around a collective identity of lack shared by those who sit at the margins of French society, the movement challenged the very foundations of the French republican tradition. In short, immigrant women have demonstrated that even though gender discrimination has been constitutive of the French republican tradition it is still possible to envision a politics of inclusion and universal humanity (Raissiguier 2010: 130).

¹⁰ Raissiguier notes how the racial and ethnic composition of the *sans papiers* movement has changed over time based on changes in immigration flows to France. In contrast to the early wave of the movement, the members of today’s *san papiers* collectives are immigrants from Eastern Europe as well as from China (Raissiguier, 2010: 16).

An approach that focuses on the claims that immigrants make is important in that it poses challenges to conventional understandings of citizenship as the basis for rights. On the other hand, focusing primarily on contentious claims made by immigrant women can overlook an adequate consideration of the factors that enable claims making. Raissiguier demonstrates how the legalization of a portion of the *sans-papiers* led to a demobilization of the movement as many who were unable to secure a change of status left the movement, was deported, or re-organized to renew the struggle. Such changes inevitably shaped how successive *sans-papier* collectives made their claims. While Raissiguier makes the important point that migrants do have discursive tools at their disposal to challenge the myths behind citizenship, the ability to exercise these tools is conditioned by political constraints and opportunities- specifically, whether migrants are given a political space to make those claims. For instance, the visible support of well-respected French intellectuals and officials who were sympathetic toward the *sans papiers*’ cause was critical to enabling the *sans-papiers* to demand rights and moreover, legitimize such claims to rights.

Additionally, an examination of the claims made by immigrants helps us to see how “unruly immigrants” subvert traditional meanings of citizenship-as-rights, but as Das Gupta (2006:18) admits “the deployment of the complex of rights by no means signals a decline in the salience of borders and nation-state.” Insofar as rights are granted or denied by nation-states, as long as immigrants make claims to the state, they reinforce the state’s link to citizenship. Therefore, while the social location and lived experiences of immigrants are critical to understanding how migrants negotiate citizenship, claims-based approaches still need to consider the role of the state and its policies in structuring the claims that mobilized immigrants make.

Cultural Approaches: Citizenship as Subjectivity

A second perspective on gender, migration and citizenship focuses on citizenship as a cultural process of subject-making into a particular type of racialized and gendered subject. Anthropologist Aihwa Ong (1996:738) has characterized citizenship as a cultural process of subjectification, “a dual process of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society.” In her comparative study of Cambodian refugees and affluent Chinese cosmopolitans in the state of California, Ong (1996:741) demonstrates how Asian Americans have been variously socialized by and positioned to manipulate state institutions, religious organizations, civilian groups, and market forces that have inscribed them as racialized and gendered citizens of differential worth. For Khmer immigrant women, the welfare state system and Mormon church organizations provided opportunities for them to challenge traditional gender norms within the household, where women who receive welfare support have increased bargaining power vis-à-vis their husbands and children. At the same time, these public and private institutions have rendered immigrant women victims of domestic abuse who are dependent on public welfare.

On the other hand, wealthy overseas Chinese strategically manage their membership as investor-immigrants and professionals who shuttle back and forth between California and the Pacific (Ong 1996: 748). Yet there are cultural limits to how they construct their subjectivity as globe-trotting cosmopolitans especially when they come in conflict with American local values and norms about civic behavior. To some extent, these affluent Chinese as transnational cosmopolitans are able to evade disciplining by the state but when it comes to local racialized battles over neighborhood politics, such as zoning and building permits, there are clear limits how much they can

fashion themselves as cosmopolitans as opposed to racialized Chinese subjects. The entanglements between race, gender and class thus operate to position and marginalize immigrants into the single homogenized category of “Asian American.”

Adopting this conceptualization of citizenship as a process of subjectification and self-making, Rhacel Parrenas (2001b: 1130), partial citizenship refers “to the stunted integration of migrants in receiving nation-states,” and is the outgrowth of globalization and inequalities in the global system which relies on the labor provided by domestic workers and other low-wage laborers. While partial citizenship differs based on the policies of receiving countries, it is characterized by the fact that partial citizens lack many basic rights, such as family unification, reproductive rights (where pregnancy is grounds for deportation in some countries), and labor rights which subject them to substandard living conditions and even confinement within the homes of their employers.

Partial citizenship however, is not just imposed Filipina domestic workers, but also constructed by the Filipinas who take advantage of their privileged status vis-à-vis the Philippines. Regarded by the home country as economic “heroes” who sustain the national economy by sending back remittances, Filipinas gain a sense of entitlement, which reinforces their nationalist identity, even as partial citizens (Parrenas 2001:1136). Furthermore, migrant domestic workers have constructed their own imagined global community that transgresses the nation-state: a diaspora that is connected through several transnational projects. These transnational projects include the circulation of ethnic goods, nonprofits that provide support services for members of the diaspora, multinational households, and widely circulating publications that link together multiple migrant communities located in different transnational spaces. The creation of a community based on partial citizenship forged by migrant Filipina domestic workers transgresses the

nation-state and represents the political potential for the creation of an even larger “imagined” global community of migrant workers (Parrenas 2001:1131).

The treatment of citizenship as a socio-cultural process of subject making and self-making demonstrates how citizenship is dialectically constructed by citizens and institutional structures such as markets, civil societies, and states. On the other hand, focusing too much on the cultural dimension of citizenship runs the risk of reifying it without adequately scrutinizing what it is and how it operates. Ong (1996:739) characterizes citizenship in the U.S. as a cultural process of “whitening” that is rooted in the Western experience of imperialism and slavery; it is this racialization that has shaped the construction of Asian immigrants. Ong’s treatment of culture however, tends to conflate culture with race without properly teasing out how one feeds upon the other and how definitions of race and culture have changed over time. Such a static treatment of culture ultimately leaves only residual room for immigrants to negotiate a self, where the emphasis is on how immigrants are made into passive racialized subjects.

Also missing in Ong’s framework is how the pre-existing cultural identities of immigrants get translated in the negotiation of racial and cultural boundaries in the host countries. As Parrenas’s study demonstrates, the cultural affinities and sense of national identity embraced by Filipina domestic workers can reinforce the construction of their selves as partial citizens despite being far away from the territorial “home.” In other words, a cultural approach to citizenship needs to take into account how immigrants negotiate multiple cultural boundaries across space and time.

Strategic Approaches: Citizenship as Strategy

A third body of literature approaches citizenship by focusing on the strategies migrant women employ to negotiate, challenge, and resist a complex web of intersecting

and conflictual power relations at both the local and transnational levels. Because of their dependence on men is grounded in unequal family and work relations, immigrant women are often regarded as those who are deprived of individual autonomy and various rights. Migrant brides in particular are in a unique position because as spouses of citizens, they are especially vulnerable to abuses that occur in the private, less visible settings of intimacy. Since their legal status and citizenship rights are tied to their marital status, many immigrant women have endured abusive and violent relationships in order to maintain their legal status. On the other hand, the sphere of the family also affords some immigrant women with the means, or a “vantage point” to contest and negotiate their location within a particular citizenship regime (R. Ito 2005). For instance, as members of families, immigrant women are embedded in social relations and networks that enable them to access rights, including employment and residency which can eventually lead to the expansion of their citizenship rights.

Focusing on Vietnamese immigrant brides in Singapore, Brenda Yeoh et al (2013) examines how these women challenge the dominant rubric of citizenship based on state-delineated divisions among Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Other (CMIO) ethnic categories. As an ethnic subject who does not fit neatly into these categories, Vietnamese wives of Singaporean citizens engage in a privatized strategy within the realm of the family to create a pathway to residency rights. For immigrant women, the permanent resident (PR) status is not simply a change in legal status but a strategy for gaining paid work, possible healthcare benefits and an independent source of income (Yeoh et al 2013:149). In the face of weak or partial incorporation by the host state, maintaining “citizenship” in the marital home constitutes an act of resilience and defiance that leads to the eventual gaining of residency and employment rights. Incorporation in the family thus serves as a

strategic act to gain incorporation in the host society. Once the immigrant wife secures a PR status, she gains bargaining power within the marriage which can lead to a measure of independence from the marital family. It is through these “everyday practices of belonging to a family that reflect the interplay of being part of different local and social settings in different political and geographical locations that constitute “strategies of simultaneity” (Yeoh et al 2013:151). Such “strategies of simultaneity” demonstrate that marriage migrants are simultaneously negotiating their citizenship rights in the sphere of family, civil society and state as well as via the sending and receiving countries.

In his discussion of Vietnamese immigrant wives in Taiwan, Hong-zen Wang (2007) discusses how Vietnamese migrant women engage in strategies of resistance through “hidden spaces” which stem from their position within abnormal social relations and contexts. According to Wang (2007:715), Vietnamese brides are dis-embedded from the host society because they engage in commodified marriage practices that in turn allow them to escape from some of the social norms forced upon women in Taiwan. These “hidden spaces of resistance” exist within the family as evidenced by the immigrant wives’ manipulation of their intimate relations with their husbands. Threats to leave the marriage by immigrant wives is sometimes an effective strategy because the men and their families have invested a considerable amount of money into the marriage and are not willing to have the immigrant bride, an important provider of unpaid care labor, leave the family. Hidden spaces of resistance are also forged outside of the family when Vietnamese immigrants purchase mobile phones and communicate with other immigrant brides and create social networks outside the reach of the family through their visits to government-run counseling centers (Wang 2007:721).

Additionally, the refusal to naturalize and acquire the citizenship of her spouse can itself constitute a strategy of resistance. In her study of Filipina migrant wives in Korea, sociologist Minjeong Kim (2013:473) argues that the refusal of some Filipina mothers to acquire Korean citizenship constitutes a “maternal strategy” that disrupts, subverts, or resists the patriarchal and ethno-nationalist impetus of their incorporation. These studies highlight the fact that immigrant wives albeit disempowered, do have weapons of resistance at their disposal to strategically negotiate their citizenship rights.

As a strategic tool, citizenship is not only a practice of resistance and subversion, but also an object of negotiation. In their comparative study of foreign domestic workers in Canada, Daiva Stasiulis and Abigail Bakan (2003, 1997) bring to light how even the most vulnerable and exploited migrants employ creative and effective strategies to negotiate with multiple gatekeepers, such as immigration officials, private interests, and employers at the global and national level. First, by focusing on how Canadian policies deny foreign domestic workers from the Caribbean and the Philippines basic citizenship rights, including the protection of labor rights, Stasiulis and Bakan (2003) de-bunk the myth of Canada as the poster child for liberal multiculturalism. Despite the embrace of official multicultural policies beginning in the 1970s, Canadian policies have denied basic labor rights as well as access to citizenship rights for migrant domestic workers.

Despite their lack of rights, domestic workers even those who are undocumented, can and do negotiate better living and workplace conditions. For example, domestic workers have at times persuaded their employers to spare them from the live-in requirement which is mandated by the Live-in Care Provider program instituted by the Canadian government to regulate the entry and exit of migrant domestic workers (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003:93). The ability to negotiate separate living quarters has

provided domestic workers with a place of rest, privacy and thus a degree of autonomy from their employers and from the Canadian government. Despite negotiating with gatekeepers within a highly unequal global capitalist system where women from poor under-developed countries supply cheap domestic and care labor under unequal terms and conditions, West Indian and Filipina domestic workers have tools of resistance at their disposal to negotiate their citizenship which have led to the incremental expansion of rights.

Of the three approaches, studies that focus on the strategic and calculated actions undertaken by migrants offer valuable insights as to why migrants may be able to circumvent restrictive immigration and citizenship policies. While the strategic approach to citizenship demonstrates that migrant women even as non-citizens exercise negotiating power, it is also important to recognize that the ability of women to engage in strategic acts and transform their citizenship is conditioned by their partial or incomplete incorporation as non-citizens. Furthermore, membership in the family, whether as immigrant wives or domestic workers, can serve as a vantage point, but also a place of oppression for immigrant women. While existing studies have emphasized the ways “strategies of resistance” can be unexpectedly empowering for some, a more comprehensive account of migrant women’s rights needs to highlight the failures as well as the successes that come from these strategic struggles by focusing on the structural constraints as well as the opportunities for their political engagement.

Citizenship as a Negotiated Relationship

Building from Daiva Stasilius and Abigail Bakan (2003:2), who define citizenship as “a negotiated relationship,” I treat citizenship as the product of active and ongoing negotiations over rights and memberships between states and non-state actors.

Citizenship entails negotiation across three dimensions: 1) policies and institutions that regulate how citizens and noncitizens access rights; 2) an array of rights, including human rights; 3) memberships that include the family, civil society as well as the state. At any given time, states, intermediary organizations (local governments, civil society organizations, transnational advocacy networks), and individuals negotiate these different dimensions to produce overlapping and at times contradictory practices and meanings of citizenship.

While most scholarship regards citizenship as entailing equal rights and duties for those who hold the status, feminist approaches have pointed to how access to rights has been far from equal. For one, men and women access rights differently due in large part to the gendered division of labor. TH Marshall's (1950) study of the development of modern citizenship was based on men's access to social rights through their waged labor. As Norwegian scholar and politician Helga Hernes (1988:190) notes, "the social-democratic citizen is the citizen worker, a male family provider, a working-class hero. His rights, identities and participation patterns were determined by his ties to the labor market, and by the web of associations and corporate structures which had grown up around these ties." In short, employment and access to paid work has been the key criterion in the development and expansion of citizenship for men (Pateman 1988b).

Meanwhile, the unpaid labor of women who until recent history were denied the right to work has shaped women's access to rights. Women's unpaid labor includes not only reproduction but providing care to children, the elderly, and the sick which many women are expected to perform without pay. For the most part, the unpaid labor of women in providing care has been compulsory where married women in particular cannot escape from domestic responsibilities, regardless of whether or not they work. In turn,

women's claims to the welfare state and access to social rights have been legitimated first and foremost by their familial or marital roles as dependents of men, rather than as individuals (Siim 2000, Orloff 1993). By regulating women's access to rights through mechanisms that deny or grant rights such as population and family policies, citizenship is a gendered institution that structures the relations between the state and women as well as between men and women.

The institution of citizenship not only shapes and constructs a certain gendered citizen but is reshaped by women and men who seek to contest and negotiate a more equal and inclusive citizenship. Citizenship, by structuring the relations between the state and individuals on the one hand and enabling individuals to reshape citizenship on the other, is thus a negotiated relationship. As citizens and as noncitizens, women have actively sought to reshape citizenship by organizing for equal rights, such as the right to vote and the right to employment. The earliest of women's movements in the 19th and 20th centuries focused on women's suffrage, and in the case of the American women's movement, the abolition of slavery. Women have not only demanded rights that have been granted to men, but also organized around rights that are specific to women (i.e. women's rights) based on their sexual difference such as reproductive rights and the right to abortion. Moreover, influenced by the global movement on human rights, women have sought to reshape citizenship by re-conceptualizing women's rights as human rights in more recent decades (Keck and Sikkink 1998). By demanding that states have a responsibility to prevent the abuse of women's human rights, such as wartime rape, domestic violence, and trafficking, women have redefined women's rights as human rights (Bunch 1997).

Women, including noncitizen women, have also shaped citizenship policies and practices by looking beyond state membership to negotiate their autonomy and rights in multiple spheres, including the so-called private sphere. As a membership organization, citizenship is generally associated with being a member of a nation-state and thus belonging to a single community (Brubaker 1992). Accordingly, noncitizens are those who are “outsiders” based on their lack of membership, whose quest for citizenship is associated with expanding the boundaries of state membership. Yet, women who are already members of the state have not aimed to reshape citizenship by focusing on their state membership but on their unequal memberships in the family and within civil society. In short, women’s exclusion from citizenship cannot be fully understood without an examination of their unequal status in different membership communities, especially the family. The reshaping of citizenship is thus intimately tied to addressing women’s unequal membership in multiple spheres where citizenship is ultimately about individual autonomy and rights allowed to citizens vis-à-vis their different memberships (Yuval-Davis 1997b).

Lastly, the impact that women have on shaping citizenship is ultimately structured by the material and ideological construction of nationhood which involves specific articulations of womanhood. As Rogers Brubaker (1992) has forcefully argued, different patterns of self-understanding, or nationhood, have shaped citizenship politics. Furthermore, understandings of nationhood are heavily gendered constructs that rely on women to both biologically and culturally reproduce the nation in a certain way. As such, women’s citizenship has had a dual nature: inclusion in the general body of citizens but with rules, regulations and policies specific to women (Yuval Davis 1997a:24). In turn,

the mutually constitutive relationship between gender and nation means that citizenship is inherently gendered (Walby 1994).

The Paradox of Citizenship: the Price of Rights

For women, the institution of citizenship presents a paradox: they are included as citizens but excluded as women (Voet 1998: 26, Hobson 2002). In other words, the very construction of citizenship rests on the exclusion of women. Characterized by Carole Pateman as “Wollstonecraft’s dilemma,” women cannot become equal citizens as women because citizenship demands that they become like men (Pateman 1988a). The contradictions of citizenship mean that the exclusion of women cannot simply be corrected by their formal incorporation but that it requires a re-conceptualization of citizenship itself (Lister, 2003: 38).

It is no surprise then that recent attempts by countries to include women into formal institutions and encourage their civic, political, and economic participation have not correlated with significant improvements in gender equality. For instance, Japan which among advanced industrialized has long been noted for its low measures of gender equality, has recently espoused the inclusion of women under the leadership of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Based on the understanding that the inclusion of women is the key to facilitating economic growth, “Abenomics” has specifically targeted expanding opportunities for women to participate in leadership positions in both the political and the corporate world (Tyson 2013). However, critics have pointed to the fact that these initiatives in the face of a strong corporate and societal culture where the majority of women leave the workplace after childbirth, fall significantly short of what is needed to facilitate and sustain women’s equal inclusion and participation.

Similarly, governments in Europe have recently demonstrated a commitment to including women and expanding their participation in the public sphere. For example, the Italian government under former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi appointed an unprecedented number of women to cabinet-level positions. Berlusconi's cabinet formed in 2008 had six female members, including a former beauty queen, Mara Carfagna. Italy's incumbent Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, to date has appointed eight women to the cabinet (Cohen 2014). Despite these notable efforts, gender inequality in Italy remains one of the highest within Europe. According to the European Gender Equality Index, female employment rates in Italy are consistently low, where women are over-represented in irregular and precarious jobs.

In short, the gendered construction of citizenship cannot be rectified simply by the formal incorporation of women. Rather than treat incorporation as a normative ideal, there is a need to question how incorporation for certain groups can constitute a trade-off that rests upon inequalities not just between men and women, but also between different groups of women. As my discussion of the link between human rights and citizenship illustrates, women's claim to human rights for migrant women came at a costly price for migrant women who have been constructed as victimized subjects who require paternal care and the watchful protection of the state. When they are incorporated and extended rights on the basis of their victimhood, migrant women are deprived of agency and thereby become exceptions to the rule, subjects who are inherently unequal.

Furthermore, in exchange for their incorporation, migrant women are expected to provide reproductive labor for their families. For instance, migrant women who do not willingly take on their roles as obliging wives and dutiful mothers are regarded with suspicion even by Korean women's activists, as those whose intentions toward marriage

and family are morally suspect. Ironically, these demands made upon migrant women go against the patriarchal ideals of family and womanhood that Korean women have long struggled against and for the most part, no longer embrace. As my examination of immigrant incorporation in Korea shows, access to citizenship does not necessarily lead to equality and empowerment for migrant women. When incorporation works to perpetuate inequalities on the basis of gender, class and race, citizenship comes at a costly price.

CHAPTER THREE

Population Anxieties, Family Policies, and Multicultural Families: Women as Care Providers

The intersections between the contemporary welfare state and women's movements that demanded greater social rights for women led to the emergence of a broad range of social policies known as family policies (O'Connor 1999, Huber 2001). In the late 1990s, most European countries began to design and implement family policies to support women's employment and the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities by providing resources to assist families, including family allowances, expanded parental leave, and funding for childcare institutions (Castles 2003). These policies have ranged from childcare provisions to various initiatives that encourage women's employment as well as monetary compensation for their unpaid care labor, and have often overlapped with other policy domains such as employment, education, welfare, and gender. Increasingly, countries facing population decline including Japan and Korea have also implemented family policies, where changes in gender relations and demographic patterns have stimulated the expansion of previously underdeveloped welfare states (Roberts 2005, P. Ito 2002, Kwon 2005).

By regulating their access to social rights, family policies can shed light on the ways the state seeks to incorporate women as citizens (Jenson 1995, Siim 2000, Bier 2010). On the one hand, family policies have facilitated a more egalitarian citizenship for women by expanding social rights, especially for working women with children. By promoting women's participation in the labor force, family policies have encouraged women to push for more rights not only as mothers, but as workers and as citizens. On the other hand, some have interpreted family policies as having a detrimental effect on

women's rights because they can work to privilege families with a male wage earner. Furthermore, by conditioning women's access to rights via their roles as mothers and wives, family policies can strengthen the link between women's citizenship and motherhood and childbearing (Jenson 1986, Pederson 1993). In short, the tensions between family policies and women's citizenship demonstrate the need to distinguish between the "different logics behind types of family policies" by carefully examining how family policies have been formulated by the state (Siim 2000:59).

Similar to Japan and Taiwan, Korea's record low birth rates and rapid aging have forced state actors to seriously grapple with the prospect of impending population decline (S. Lee 2009, Park and Cho 1995). Although the Japanese and Taiwanese governments have attempted to respond to demographic trends through pro-natalist initiatives, the expansion of childcare provisions, and the acceptance of temporary foreign workers, neither country has opted to incorporate immigrants as a response to downward demographic trends (Chen 2012, P. Ito 2004, Mason 2001). In Korea, the government responded to population decline through the adoption of family policies, including a "multicultural family policy" that targets the incorporation of foreign women married to its citizens. Why did Korea, unlike Japan and Taiwan, respond to its population woes by instituting family policies aimed at incorporating migrant women?

In this chapter, I explain the process by which the Korean state seeks to incorporate marriage migrant women as members of Korean society through an examination of family policies. I trace the evolution of family policies, beginning with the family planning policies in the 1960s to the multicultural family support policies in the present day. I argue that family policies demonstrate the resilience of state efforts to incorporate women as the primary care providers of families by reinforcing the links

between citizenship and their unpaid labor as the primary providers of care for families. By fostering private-public partnerships that continue to mobilize women to take on the primary responsibility of providing care and welfare in both the public and private spheres, the state has effectively privatized the burden of social care and welfare onto Korean and migrant women.

In the first section, I examine the origins of family policies by turning to the state's family planning programs which were instituted in the 1960s. In the second section, I link the expansion of a women's policy fostered by democratization and the growth of the women's movement on the one hand with a growing discourse on families in "crisis" which paved the way for conservative coalitions to push for family policies on the other hand. Third, I analyze the contested emergence of a family policy that emphasizes the normative "healthy" family by demanding women's roles as care providers which reveals tensions between conservative and progressive social forces over how to address issues concerning the family. The fourth section discusses how multicultural families became the focus of family policies amid growing national anxiety over population decline. The last section discusses how family policies have created opportunities for women to participate as providers of welfare provisions for families and thereby continued to place the burden of socially reproducing "normative" families onto women.

Family Planning as Women's Civic Duty

The historical origins of family policy in Korea are rooted in the family planning programs that were instituted by the Park Chung-Hee authoritarian regime as part of the population control policy in the 1960s. Acknowledged as one of the most successful population control programs in the world, the Korean family planning program relied on

the mass mobilization and participation of housewives and rural women to implement and monitor contraceptive use. As family planning agents and members of Mother's Clubs, women, mostly housewives, were expected to be responsible reproducers and household managers (S. Moon 2005, Park 1976). At the same time, an unintended consequence of these family planning programs was that through their participation, women became active participants in rural and local community activities (J. Lee 2014).

Many developing countries, such as Brazil, Taiwan and Egypt, adopted family planning as a form of population control in the 1960s and 1970s. In the context of the Cold War, the US and her allies regarded overpopulation in the non-industrialized Third World as the cause of poverty and a breeding ground for communism (Greenhalgh 1996).¹¹ International organizations such as the World Bank, USAID, and UNFDP increased funding for demographic research to be conducted by organizations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the Population Council which exerted pressure on the governments of developing countries to adopt family planning programs as a condition for economic aid (Donaldson 1990). Moreover, population control aimed at facilitating economic growth had particular appeal to authoritarian leaders who adopted family planning measures as part of their economic development strategies in places such as Taiwan (1959), Egypt (1960), Korea (1962), Brazil (1977), Bangladesh (1978), and China (1980) (Robinson 2007).

In Korea, the military regime under Park Chung-hee (1960-79) integrated family planning policies into its economic development strategy (S. Moon 2005). In 1962,

¹¹ Theories of development in the 1960s, especially modernization theory, have had a strong influence on the social construction of "overpopulation" in the developing world as a political problem. These theories invoked Thomas Malthus's caution that economic instability will persist without state intervention to reign in the population growth rate because population growth is destined to outgrow the rate of food production.

Korea's population growth rate of 3 percent superseded the economic growth rate which was recorded at 2.6 percent. The Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea (hereafter PPFK) created in 1961 with assistance from the IPPF, was an influential advocate of the family planning program. In 1962, the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNP) consisting of the leaders of the military junta, appointed Yang Jae Mo, a medical doctor and one of the founding members of the PPFK to formulate population control initiatives. Yang presented statistical data to policymakers that pointed to a figure of \$2 billion that could be gained by 1971 through successful family planning (Yang 1966: 307). Not only would family planning bring economic gains, Yang (1977: 64) argued it would improve maternal and child health, the welfare of the family, and overall social stability. Soon thereafter, the members of the Supreme Council unanimously accepted family planning as a strategy of economic development. Family planning was adopted as official policy in December 1961 and it became integrated into the 2nd Five Year Economic Plan in 1967.

Under authoritarian rule, family planning represented the “single most important policy for women” (S. Moon 2005:81). The goal of the family planning program was quite simply to reduce the natural increase in population by imposing widespread contraceptive use on the population, primarily women's contraceptive use. Beginning with a population growth rate of 3 percent in 1961, the PPFK aimed to reduce the population growth rate to 2.5 percent (1966), 2 percent (1971), 1.5 percent (1976), and 1.3 (1981). The PPFK set yearly quotas for how many couples would have to comply with contraceptive use to reach the targeted population growth rate. In 1966, proclaimed by the government as the “Great Year of Family Planning,” state planners set the goal at an all-time high of 400,000 IUD insertions and 20,000 vasectomies (PPFK 1983). In later

years, contraceptive use and sterilizations were coupled with incentives such as housing loans, monetary support and subsidized health costs to families with one or two children.

Mobilizing women to implement and monitor contraceptive use lay at the crux of the family planning program. In particular, “family planning agents” (*kajok kyehoek yowŏn*) enabled the state to monitor citizens’ contraceptive use down to the level of the smallest administrative unit. Recruited by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (MHSA) beginning in 1964, these agents were often local residents in the towns and villages to which they were assigned. While some had training as nurses’ aides, a considerable number was without experience or qualifications (Yang 1977:70). Nevertheless, these women were dispatched to local health clinics (*pokŏnso*) across the nation to introduce the idea and practice of contraception and to monitor their use by interacting intimately with the local residents. Each agent was given a quota of residents whose contraceptives use had to be reported through regularly attended meetings with the county manager, an employee of the MHSA. Issuing free IUD insertion coupons that could be claimed at the local health clinic, and holding demonstrations of how to use a condom, these family planning agents promoted contraception as a form of “patriotic duty,” where contraceptive use constituted a performance of civic duty (Yi 1989). Throughout the 1970s, the state continued to recruit the family planning agents and by 1975, the central government had dispatched nearly 2,570 family planning agents around the country (Yang 1977:70).

Family planning agents were critical to securing compliance from rural families who were unfamiliar with the idea of contraception. The 2006 Korean film, “Mission Sex Control,” (*Jal salabose*) which chronicles the travails of a young family planning agent Hyun-joo in the early 1960s, vividly illustrates the challenges of securing compliance

from the population. The protagonist Hyun-joo is sent from Seoul to a remote rural village that has been the most resistant to family planning directives. In her first town hall meeting with the local residents, Hyun-joo attempts to explain what family planning is only to be met with blank stares from the villagers. When they finally understand why she has come to their village, the audience erupts in unruly indignant anger. One livid elderly woman points to her pregnant daughter-in-law asking Hyun-joo, “with only two granddaughters in my family, who will honor the ancestors?”¹² Despite Hyun-joo’s attempts to convince the villagers that family planning is a state project, the villagers disperse to their homes, refusing to believe that the state would make such absurd demands on the people. Over time however, Hyun-joo is able to secure the trust of the villagers who begin to practice conception for various different reasons. The film thus demonstrates the critical role played by the family planning agents as intermediaries between the state apparatus and the rural population.

Furthermore, family planning programs mandated that rural women be organized in Family Planning Mothers’ Clubs (hereafter Mother’s Clubs) which unexpectedly came to serve as the basis of rural women’s participation in their communities. Recognizing that many of the family planning agents were overburdened because each agent was responsible for serving approximately 2,200 couples, the PPFK with authority from the MHSA began organizing rural women into collectives in 1968 (Park 1976). These collectives called Mother’s Clubs aimed to better utilize existing interpersonal communication networks and local leadership to legitimize family planning practices

¹² According to Confucian rituals, only male heirs can preside over rites honoring the ancestors. Under neo-Confucianism, ancestor worship in Korea was promoted as a means of strengthening the bonds within the family and continuing on the family lineage (Deuchler 1992: 133). Because sons were considered the carriers of family lineage, preference for sons has been a noted phenomenon in Korea (Chung & Gupta, 2007).

among rural communities. Initially, the village leader appointed the women who would participate based on their standing and reputation within the village, and the clubs were limited in size to approximately ten to twelve members. By the end of 1968, the first year of creating Mothers' Clubs, there were over 12,650 clubs; by 1975, the number had grown to over 28,000, involving over 700,000 women from Korea's rural villages (H. Park 1976:276).

While Mother's Clubs were organized in the urban areas, their roles were not as prominent as in the rural communities, where women had rather limited opportunities to participate in public life. The Mother's Clubs met at least once a month to report on any notable changes, to gather information and receive training. As with the family planning agents, the clubs did not take part in any decision making, but served to implement directives from male county and provincial managers.

Contrary to the expectations of state planners, the Mothers' Clubs did not focus solely on monitoring family planning, but they engaged in local development by re-directing some of the allocated funds acquired through local sales of IUDs into development projects, such as the construction of village meeting halls, holding festivals for the elderly, and maintaining public facilities.¹³ The successful mobilization of women's voluntary labor into rural development through the Mother's Clubs served as the inspiration for the New Village (*Saemaul Undong*) Movement which President Park launched in 1972 to mobilize voluntary labor for the purposes of rural development.¹⁴ In order to more

¹³ Initially, the Mothers' Clubs received funding from the PPFK. However, many of them became self-funded through sales proceeds from selling contraceptives to local villagers (Park et al, 1976: 276)

¹⁴ The New Village Movement was an initiative begun by Park Chung-Hee which aimed to revitalize and foster rural development by mobilizing the rural labor force into projects to improve the basic infrastructure of the countryside. Through a spirit of reform, the movement aimed to diminish the gaps between the rural and urban areas (K. Hwang 2010: 238).

efficiently coordinate these women's mass organizations, the Park regime merged the Mothers' Clubs with the New Village Women's Association in 1977, which became the most influential state-administered women's organization in the period leading up to democratization. These mass organizations were used for not only implementing state-led initiatives but also for "inculcating political loyalty to the authoritarian regime" (Chung and Gupta 2007: 763, S. Moon 2002: 489). Family planning programs that relied on the mass participation of women thus highlight "the importance and effectiveness of women's organization as a channel through which to accomplish national projects" (J. Lee 2014: 284).

In 1988, the family planning program achieved its primary objective of reducing the fertility rate when total fertility rate (TRF) was recorded to be below that of the replacement level (S. Lee 2009: 62). Since then, the fertility rate has continued to remain below replacement level dropping to one of the lowest in the developed world [see Table 3.1 below]. In the 1990s, the successful realization of population control objectives and a transition to democracy in 1987 which constrained the state's ability to mobilize the population through coercive means prompted the Korean government to re-evaluate its family planning policies. A Population Policy Deliberation Committee was established in 1994 to review the status of population policy which led to the officially phasing out of family planning in 1996 and the adoption of a new policy that emphasized reproductive health care services, as opposed to sterilizations.

State planners thus sought to facilitate economic growth by decreasing the birth rate through population control. Whether as individual family planning agents or organized groups of mothers, women disproportionately took on the burden of implementing and monitoring the family planning programs. The mass mobilization of

women made possible the attainment of state-directed goals, but also contributed to rural and local development by providing opportunities for women to direct resources into community projects.

TABLE 3.1 TOTAL FERTILITY RATE (TFR), 1960-1995

	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995
Total Fertility Rate (average)	6.00	4.51	2.73	1.7	1.64

Source: National Statistics Office, Korea

The Expansion of Women's Rights and the Family in "Crisis"

The 1980s and 90s were marked by two contrasting shifts that shaped state efforts to incorporate women. The first was the growing recognition of women as citizens with equal rights which was fueled by the demands of the grassroots women's movement. Beginning in the 1970s, women factory workers began to form grassroots organizations that protested against the exploitation of factory workers, and by the late 1980s, women's groups formed an inter-class coalition that joined forces with other labor and student groups to participate in mass protest against the authoritarian regime (S. and K. Kim 2011, S. Moon 2005, Louie 1995). Meanwhile, Chun Doo-Hwan (1980-88), Park Chung-Hee's successor began to bend to international pressures to acknowledge rights for women by ratifying the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984. With the onset of civilian rule in 1993 under Kim Young Sam and the first progressive candidate Kim Dae Jung, to come to power in 1998, the Korean government continued to oversee the expansion of a women's policy aimed at fostering gender equality.

The second shift came from the political need to weather the social impact of economic liberalizations that registered widely as families in "crisis." In particular, the 1997 financial crisis and its impact on society led to state attempts to re-privatize social

care provision onto women and families and the emergence of a socially conservative coalition that increasingly voiced the need for state intervention in supporting families. By the early 2000s, the focus had shifted away from women's policy aimed at the attainment of gender equality to family policies that worked to reassert families and women as the primary providers of care and individual welfare.

The Growth of Women's Policy

The military regime under Chun Doo-Hwan whose legitimacy was increasingly questioned by international society found it difficult to avoid international pressures for economic liberalization as well as integration into the international community (K. Kim 2002). Under Chun and his successor, Roh Tae-Woo (1988-1993), the Korean state adopted a women-in-development (WID) approach that had been propagated by the UN since it declared 1975 the International Women's Year (S. and K. Kim 2014). The WID approach paid attention to the role of women alienated during the course of economic development by focusing on women's welfare, health, and relief from poverty. Attention to women's concerns led to the establishment of the Korea Women's Development Institute (KWDI) in 1983, a government-operated research think-tank which continues to work closely with government agencies to formulate policies related to women (S. Moon 2000).

During this time, grassroots women's movements began to coalesce in opposition to the authoritarian regime and to demand social and political transformation. In contrast to the administered mass organizations (AMOs) like the National Association of Korean Wives, the Federation of Housewives' Clubs and the New Village Women's Association that dominated women's civic participation in the 1970s, these organizations increasingly challenged the legitimacy of the authoritarian state and in particular its use of violence

towards women. One of the first attempts to create an independent women's organization came with the establishment of Womenlink (*yŏsŏng pyungwuhoe*), which was founded by feminist intellectuals in 1983.¹⁵ In its founding speech, Womenlink members stated, "Our movement addresses the suffering of all women, including urban and rural women, workers, housewives, and youths. Our sufferings may differ by class but these problems facing women can only be solved by forging a genuine democratic society" (Womenlink 1983). Under this grassroots organization, different groups of women with different interests were united in their push for democratization. Women's groups formed an even bigger coalition with the founding of the Korean Women's Association United (KWAU, or *Han 'guk yŏsŏng danche yonhap hoe*) in 1987. After transition to formal democracy in 1987 when president-elect Roh Tae-Woo adopted an eight-point reform package that included direct presidential elections, the women's movement began to diversify and address a broad range of issues aimed at expanding rights for women based on women's specific needs and interests. As Kim Kyounghui (2002:20) notes, the women's movement during this time began to break away from previous frames that focused on the oppression of women to one where women were situated as those who actively "transform and create a new society."

Increasingly, women's policy moved away from narrow questions of women's welfare in relation to development to focus on broader questions of gender equality, which led to the passage of legislation that sought to abolish discrimination against women and to include women into the state machinery. The first civilian government under the leadership of Kim Young-Sam (1993-98) responded to grassroots pressures from the women's movement by incorporating more women into positions of power.

¹⁵ Womenlink changed its name in Korean to the *Yŏsŏngminwuhoe* in 1987.

Under Kim's tenure, a record number of women were appointed to cabinet-level posts: Hwang San-seong (Ministry of the Environment), Park Yang-shil (Ministry of Health and Welfare), and Kwon Young-ja (Ministry of Political Affairs). Kim further went on to set up a bureau for women's affairs under the secretariat of the President and to establish a special committee on women's affairs in the National Assembly which was assigned with deliberating on legislation involving women. For instance, the passage of the Framework Act on Women's Development (*Yösongbalchön'gibonböp*) in 1995 outlined the basic objectives of women's policies as "the realization of gender equality, the promotion of women's participation in society and the enhancement of women's welfare (Article 3)."

The women's movement and the state found points of convergence in their joint promotion of gender mainstreaming beginning in 1995, which was a strategy promoted by the United Nations to mainstream women's policies in all areas of social, political and economic life. In short, the 1990s was marked by a shift in the relationship between the state and the women's movement from one of opposition and contestation to cooperation and negotiation, resulting in a women's policy that increasingly focused on gender equality and women's rights (S. Moon 2002).

Women's policy continued to expand in the latter half of the 1990s as the women's movement became further institutionalized through close relations with the state (S. and K. Kim 2011). In 1998, Kim Dae-Jung (1998-2003) became the first progressive candidate to assume the Presidency and his administration prioritized gender discrimination as a matter of the national agenda. Upon taking office in 1998, Kim established the Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs (PCWA) as a new government institution in charge of coordinating women's policies, which marked the first step towards the creation of a women's agency. To facilitate the coordination, Kim

dispatched an officer in charge of women's policies to all the different ministries. Under Kim, a record number of women including intellectuals who majored in women's studies and activists with experience in the women's movement entered formal politics as political appointees, members of political parties, and leaders in local governments. In 2001, Kim elevated the PCWA to a cabinet-level ministry, and established the Ministry of Gender Equality (MGE). To head the ministry, Kim appointed Han Myeong-sook a former women's activist who later became Korea's first female Prime Minister in 2006. For the women's movement, the creation of the Ministry provided an institutionalized channel to articulate women's concerns and needs.

From Women to Family Policy

Even as women's policy expanded, there was a growing public discourse that increasingly brought political attention to the family as an institution under crisis. Three different factors contributed to this growing sense of crisis. The first came in the aftermath of the financial crisis during which time the discourse of "family breakdown" came to explain all the social ills that manifested during economic instability and financial hardship. A second factor was the broad demographic changes that the entire society was experiencing, including low marriage rates, high divorce rates, the delay or postponement of marriage, and low birth rates. The third facet of the crisis came from a backlash against a monumental reform to family law that abolished the decades-old family-head (*hoju*) system, one that mobilized powerful social conservatives to defend the family as a socio-cultural institution.

First, the 1997 Asian financial crisis (known as the IMF crisis in Korea) and the structural reforms demanded by the IMF in exchange for the \$55 million bail-out package posed a major challenge to the fledgling women's policy by temporarily reducing

resources and escalating the trend toward privatization (S. Moon 2002:128). The neoliberal policy measures instituted by the Korean government following the crisis saw the increase in irregular jobs, unemployment and increases in poverty rates that conflicted with the calls from the women's movement to prioritize equal employment. From 1996 to 1998, the unemployment rate more than tripled from 2 to 6.8 percent, while poverty rates in urban areas went from 7 to 21 percent (Kwon 2001:220). During the period of economic retrenchment following the crisis, the government re-privatized many public services for women, cutting back for instance on programs for unemployed women and support for victims of sexual violence (K. Kim 2002:31). Although the Kim Dae-Jung government expanded welfare provisions overall by expanding social insurance coverage and implementing new public assistance programs, it ultimately adopted a "productive" welfare policy which in effect "re-privatized" women's roles as the main providers of individual security and welfare (J. Song 2006:40).¹⁶

During this period of economic hardship, the seeds of the discourse on "family breakdown" which problematized women's employment and economic independence emerged. In her study of the social impact of the financial crisis, anthropologist Jesook Song (2009:52) argues that the discourse on "family breakdown" (*kajeong haech'e*) presumes employed men as the breadwinners of the family, women as keepers of the hearth, and the nuclear heterosexual family as the core of social well-being." It denounced homosexuality, marital discord, illicit and extra-marital sexual relations, as well as women's labor participation as sources of this breakdown. Yet, the financial needs of households demanded that women, including housewives seek employment in

¹⁶ The Kim Dae Jung government extended the Employment Insurance Program, the National Pension Program, National Health Insurance, and the Basic Livelihood Assistance Program, the four pillars of the Korean welfare state. See Kwon (2005) for further reading.

order to support their families, sometimes replacing men as the main breadwinners of families (Kim and Finch 2002). These financially successful women were denounced as irresponsible mothers who abandoned their children in favor of “selfish” desires to work and seek personal achievement. Furthermore, the conservative ideology of family even manifested in the treatment of homeless women as “undeserving” of public protection driven by the notion that they were “bad” mothers who had left their homes and thus abandoned their children (J. Song 2006).

Second, the discourse on family breakdown did not end with the recovery from the financial crisis but has remained and expanded in response to reported demographic trends. For one, public attention has focused on the number of divorces as a sign of the family in distress. While divorce was almost unheard of in the 1970s, the divorce rate increased over 250 percent from 1993 to 2003, spiking in the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis (NSO 2005). In 1970, the crude divorce rate was 0.4 and by 2004, it had risen to 2.9, fast becoming one of the highest in the world. Not only had the divorce rate increased, Korean women and men were overall found to be marrying later with a growing proportion of people foregoing marriage altogether (Tsuya 2004). Between 1970 and 2004, the crude marriage rate had dropped from 9.2 to 6.4 marriages per 1,000 people (NSO 2005).

Koreans have not only been marrying less, but also postponing marriage, where the average age of marriage for men has risen from 26.7 to 30.6 years of age between 1972 and 2004, while for women it rose from 22.6 to 27.5 years of age during the same period. While marriage rates have declined, co-habitation as well as single-person households have increased significantly. In 2010, the National Statistics Office reported that about 4.1 million or approximately 24 percent of all households was a single-person

household (NSO 2014). These statistics have been constructed as indicators of the family as an institution in “crisis.”

Third, the efforts of the women’s movement to abolish the family-head (*hoju*) system which had long posed as a barrier to gender equality triggered a conservative backlash from those who sought to preserve the system. Established as part of the Civil Code in 1912, the family head (*hoju*) system assigned the position of family head to males who inherited their positions through primogeniture (Nam 2010). As the basis for identifying citizens, the system defined the family in terms of the family members’ relationships to the male *hoju* and gave him authority over the family in matters of inheritance and other legal issues. Because women could not become a family head, their rights within the family were dependent on the male *hoju*, whether it was her father (before marriage) or husband. The system meant that women were denied civil rights in marriage and denied an equal status as citizens, whose rights were always subordinated to male kin.

While women’s activists had engaged in efforts to reform the family law since the 1960s, it was only after a landmark revision to the Nationality Law in 1997 that the women’s movement gained momentum to push for abolishing the family-head system (Nam 2010, S. and K. Kim 2014). The revision to the Nationality Law granted nationality to the children born to Korean mothers and foreign-born fathers, allowing citizenship to be inherited both through patrilineal and matrilineal lines (Chung and Kim 2012, H. Yang 2011). In 1998, a women’s activist named Ko Un established the Citizens for the Abolition of the Family Head System (*hojuje p’yejirul wihan siminui moim*), a civic organization which engaged in coalition building with other women’s organizations over the next several years. By 2000, the coalition had over 130 member organizations, and it

engaged in active grassroots campaigning and petitioning to secure popular support for abolishing the family head system. Due to these efforts, the Constitutional Court made a historic ruling in February 2005, that the family head system was unconstitutional which provided the political momentum needed for the National Assembly to pass the new Family Relation Registration Act that replaced the family-head system of registration in 2008.¹⁷

Yet, the relentless efforts of the women's movement in conjunction with the MGE to abolish the family head system provoked fierce opposition from conservative members of society, especially Confucian scholars who sought to defend the system by insisting on its value as a cultural institution. These conservatives waged sit-in protests in front of the MGE and the National Assembly to express their opposition to the abolition (Kim and Nam 2003). Feminists however, provided an alternative narrative, arguing that the *hoju* system was a product of Japanese colonial rule. By doing so, they were able to secure additional popular support from progressive legal scholars who joined the feminists in their struggle (Nam 2010:70). Although the women's movement was ultimately successful in getting the *hoju* system abolished, the abolition of the system did not quell conservatives' concerns that the family was under attack. Rather, conservative groups remained mobilized around a traditional ideology of the family that supported the push for the establishment of family policies.

Instituting Family Policy: Making Families “Healthy”

As the public fiercely debated the abolition of the *hoju* system, the NSO reported that the fertility rate had reached an all-time low of 1.17 children per woman in 2002, a

¹⁷ The *hojuk*, or family registry has been replaced by the Family Relation Certificate which maintains separate records for each individual family member.

10 percent decrease from the previous year [see table 3.2 below]. Within Korea, researchers and media commentators widely referred to this phenomenon as the “1.17 shock” (J. Lee 2004). Not only was the fertility rate in Korea below that of replacement level, it was the one of the lowest among OECD countries.¹⁸ Referring to fertility decline as the “greatest threat” to the country, newspapers reported that “population and fertility trends are a warning that the country is on the brink of decline. We will miss the opportunity to put the brakes on this national decline if we do not act fast and institute proper measures” (*Chosun Ilbo*, 24 September 2004). Low birth rates were thus framed as threats to the very existence of the nation which require immediate and extensive state intervention.

TABLE 3.2 TOTAL FERTILITY RATES (TFR), 1997-2007

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1.54	1.47	1.42	1.47	1.30	1.17	1.19	1.16	1.08	1.13	1.26

Source: National Statistics Office, Korea

Perceiving the revision of the family law and extremely low fertility rates as signs of the family under distress, several conservative groups mobilized to form a formidable coalition composed of the Korea Home Economics Association (*Daehan kajeong hakhoe*), the Korea Senior Citizens Association (*Daehan noinhoe*) and the Korea Healthy Family Action Campaign (*Gungang gajeong silch'on undong ponbu*). The Korea Home Economics Association (KHEA), established in 1947 has been a major promoter of home economics, a professional field that has been dominated by women. In the 1970s, the KHEA partnered closely with the state to support family planning initiatives through research and to disseminate information and provide training to women and housewives. In recent years however, home economics as an academic field had experienced a steep

¹⁸ The average replacement level is 2.1, the number of children each woman would have to have to maintain current population levels.

decline in enrollment with the rise and expansion of women's studies. The professional organization thus eyed the institution of family policy as an opportunity to rejuvenate the dying field (S. and K. Kim 2014:113).

The Korea Healthy Family Action Campaign is a non-profit organization created in 2002 as a part of the 'Christian Ethics Movement' (*kidokkyo yull'ri silchon undong*) that was established in 1987 as a Protestant faith-based movement to strengthen Christian values in Korean society. The coalition also had the strong support of the Korea Senior Citizens Association which had been mobilized around strengthening the institution of family which was no longer a reliable source of elderly care. Led primarily by the KHEA, the coalition secured the support of the Ministry of Health and Welfare to propose the Framework Act to Support Healthy Families (*Kŏn'ganggajŏnggibonbŏp*) in the National Assembly in 2003.

Although feminists regarded family policies as potentially beneficial for women, the Korea Women's Association United (KWAU), the largest umbrella organization for women saw the proposed bill as a thinly disguised effort by conservatives to impose a normative ideology of a "healthy" family. These opponents called for a more expansive definition of the family, arguing that the legislation was based on promoting the heterosexual normative family linked by blood and adoptive ties as the main provider of care to individuals. The proposed bill defined the family (*kajok*) as the "social unit formed of marriage, blood-ties and adoption" and the household (*kajeong*) as "the community formed of members who participate together in the daily activities of subsistence, childcare, protection, and education (Article 3)." Pointing to different family arrangements that included single parent households, cohabitation, and children born out of wedlock, women's groups further argued that the Framework Act "tries to recover a

normative ‘healthy family’ rather than accommodate the changes to families and thus cannot properly address the myriad problems facing families today” (KWAU 2003). By imposing a normative and biased definition of a “healthy” family, Koreans feminists argued that the law would discriminate against “unhealthy” families (J. Lee, 2004).

Furthermore, activists in the women’s movement argued that the various changes - low birth rates, rapid aging, and shifting family arrangements- should not be regarded as national “crises” requiring heavy state intervention, but acknowledged as changes that need to be accommodated through the expansion of appropriate welfare provisions. Opponents thus viewed the proposed bill as an attempt by conservatives to re-impose the traditional ideal of a patriarchal family onto society. Instead, feminists along with progressive-leaning social welfare professionals rallied to oppose the proposed bill by insisting that “family-related legislation embrace a new paradigm of the family whose policy content includes a gender-equal perspective” (KWAU 2003).

Yet, the women’s movement was not united in its stance towards family issues and opposition to the bill did not fully coalesce until after the bill had already passed (S. and K. Kim 2014:95). The slow reaction from the women’s movement reflects the movement’s conflicted views on the family. One activist characterized family issues as the “Achilles heel” of the women’s movement, noting that: “women's activism has traditionally been separated into different fields such as environmental issues, gender policy, or women’s employment and have tended to stray away from the family because women haven’t been able to forge a united stance on the family (interview with Kang Seong-euy, 3 October 2012, Seoul).” Another women’s activist noted, “We feel uncomfortable discussing family issues. There have also been discussions about whether the women’s movement should even be concerned with family issues” (quoted from S.

and K. Kim 2014: 95). Although the women's movement had rallied to reform family law, they have remained divided as to whether the family should be a focus of the movement.

The initial indecision and hesitation from grassroots activists meant that women's organizations were unable to mobilize quickly to oppose the proposed legislation on healthy families. Without significant opposition, the National Assembly passed the Framework Act on Healthy Families on December 2003 [Act No. 11045]. Going into effect on January 1, 2005, the Framework Act has been regarded as the first effort by the state to directly intervene in family life since family planning policies, and it has set the precedent for the direction of future family policy (M. Chin 2012, H. Lee 2012).

The Framework Act adopts a preventive approach to families in "crisis" by promoting social responsibility for fostering families and communities that are friendly to families. According to the Framework Act, healthy families are "families that satisfy family members' needs and protect family members' quality of life as human beings (Article 3)." The definition highlights the assumption that the family, rather than the state, is to remain the primary unit responsible for individual care and well-being. Furthermore, the Framework Act mandates local governments to provide comprehensive preventive family-based counseling and welfare services through "healthy family support centers (Article 35)." By regulating women's access to social rights, family policies thus reinforced the state's efforts to keep the burden of social care relegated to the realm of the family.

Meanwhile, the timely transfer of administering family policy from the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) to the Ministry of Gender Equality (MGE) in May 2005 meant that the implementation of this act along with other landmark social policies, including the Mother/Father Welfare Act, was entrusted to the women's ministry which

was newly named the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (*Yŏsŏnggajokpu*).¹⁹ The unprecedented move was the culmination of lobbying efforts by the women's ministry and the Roh government's political willingness to support the expansion of women's policies. With the transfer of the family division, the budget of the ministry grew more than ten-fold between 2004 and 2005 [see Table 3.3 below].

**TABLE 3.3. MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY
BUDGET, 2001-2013 (HUNDRED MILLION WON)**

2001	288
2002	427
2003	435
2004	452
2005	6438
2006	8749
2007	11378
2008	702
2009	784
2010	965
2011	2194
2012	4493
2013	5239

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Korea.

Because of their discomfort with issues concerning the family and their opposition to the Framework Act however, the response from the women's movement was divided over the expansion of the women's ministry. While the KWAU expressed its support for the entrusting of family policies to the women's ministry, a younger generation of feminists led by the Sister Network (*Ŏnni net'ŭwŏk'ŭ*) waged a widespread petition campaign to oppose the change. Sister Network was established in 2004 by women's activists in their 20s and 30s who found their interests underrepresented within the broader women's movement led by an older generation of women seasoned by their prior struggles for democratization. The leaders of the Sister Network argued that "women

¹⁹ The Mother/Father Welfare Act enacted in 2002 provides housing support, job training, and employment assistance, childcare and tuition assistance for low income single parents.

should have the right to choose different kinds of lifestyles not as members of families but as individuals and that entrapping women in the boundary of family invites another form of discrimination against them” (KASW 2005:6). Furthermore they argued that the very fact of using the family as a site of government intervention would strengthen the discourse of a family “crisis” constructed by social conservatives. Yet, these interests were subsumed by the fact that both the ministry and the leaders of the mainstream women’s movement regarded the expansion of the ministry as an opportunity to expand the policies for women.

Yet, the newfound increase in status for women’s ministry was short-lived. Despite its initial high hopes, the failure of MGEF to deliver on a promise to expand public childcare facilities led to the replacement of Minister Chi Eun-hee a former grassroots activist from the KWAU by Jang Ha-jin in 2005. A life-long academic with ties to the KWDI, Minister Jang was less willing to accommodate the demands of progressive feminists, marking the end of the short honeymoon period between the Ministry and the women’s movement (S. and K. Kim 2011). The election of conservative leader Lee Myung-bak to the presidency in 2007 further hampered feminists’ efforts to seek a repeal of the Framework Act.

In the end, the progressive Roh government oversaw the passage of controversial legislation that espoused conservative ideals regarding the family and contradicted the gains made by women’s activists to secure gender equality in the family through the abolition of the family-head system. The influential conservative coalition whose interests lay with revamping the institution of the family was pivotal in the institution of policies that reinforced the family, not the state, as the primary unit responsible for caregiving. Unlike family policies that encourage work-family balance through cash benefits,

extended parental leave and expanded childcare support, Korean family policies have regulated women's access to social welfare rights by demanding the maintenance of "healthy" families that demands that women continue to provide the brunt of care labor to families.

Multicultural Family Support Policies: Incorporating Marriage Migrants into Families

As the state implemented the newly instituted family policy, public fears surrounding low fertility rates continued to grow; these fears were partly exacerbated by the fact that as Korean women were having fewer babies, the number of so-called multicultural children born to immigrant women was growing. Multicultural children" (or *tamunhwa kajǒng janyǒ*) refer to the mixed-race children born to marriage migrants and their Korean spouses. Due to the increase in the number of cross-border marriages which began to escalate during the early 2000s, the number of multicultural children had grown several-fold in the past several years. In 2006, an estimated 7,998 multicultural children were enrolled in Korean schools, a number that grew nearly eight-fold to 55,780 school-aged multicultural children in 2013 [see Table 3.4 below].²⁰ In 2013 alone, 21,290 children were born to multicultural families, amounting to a total of over 190,000 multicultural children (NSO 2013).

TABLE 3.4. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
44,258	58,007	107,689	121,935	151,154	168,583	191,328

Source: Ministry of Public Security & Administration, 2013

²⁰ According to the report from the Ministry of Public Security & Administration (2013), the sudden increase in the number of multicultural children from 2008 to 2009 is partly accounted by the fact that beginning in 2009, the data included the information provided by the spouses of marriage migrants, leading to a more accurate count in the number of children who are members of multicultural families.

As more multicultural children entered schools, media reports focused on the difficulties experienced by these children due to social isolation and discrimination. In the first National Survey on Multicultural Families conducted in 2009, the MGEF reported that 74 percent of multicultural families with elementary school-age children experienced difficulties in school (S. Kim 2010:12). Moreover, it was reported that they experienced delays in linguistic development compared to their peers and had difficulty in completing their homework. The newspaper daily, the *Donga Ilbo* ran a series on multicultural families in which one of the articles focused on the psychological and emotional stress experienced by multicultural children: “many multicultural adolescents experience alienation and refuse to go to school because they are unable to keep up with the coursework or have developmental disabilities that are left untreated” (S. Lee 2011). Increasingly, public concerns also began to focus on the experiences of previous generations of mixed-race people, also known as *honhyorin*, who had been regarded as social outcasts as an indicator that greater efforts need to be made to include the present generation of multicultural children.

Mixed-race people have had a presence in Korea since the ceasefire to the Korean War in 1953, but until the early 2000s there was an absence of serious public discussions about them (M. Lee 2008, E. Kim 2007). Born to Korean mothers and foreign fathers in the aftermath of the Korean War, *honhyorin* (literally, mixed-blood) were regarded as “shameful” reminders of Korea’s continued reliance on American and UN military prowess (M. Lee 2008: 57). In the early years of the Republic following the end of the Korean War, the first President of the Republic, Syngman Rhee (1948-60) adopted a policy of sending *honhyorin* for overseas adoption, based on the belief that these children should grow up in the country of their fathers. From 1955-2005 approximately 6,139 to

7,398 mixed-race children were sent for adoption overseas according to official estimates (K. Park 2013). The passage of the Amerasian Act in 1982 by the U.S. Congress which granted residency, but not citizenship to the Asian children fathered by U.S. citizens further facilitated the departure of *honhyorin* from Korea.

Despite the steady decreases in the *honhyorin* population, the number of mixed-race children began to increase yet again throughout the 1990s and 2000s due to international marriages between Korean men and marriage migrant women. In response to the growing number of mixed-race children, civic organizations began to organize against Korea's exclusionary and discriminatory treatment of mixed-race people. In 2003, activists from Durebang (also known as My Sister's Place), a support organization for camptown (*gijich'on*) prostitutes conducted the first comprehensive fact-finding study of *honhyorin* for the National Human Rights Commission.²¹ Extrapolating from estimates provided by the Pearl Buck Foundation and an informal *honhyorin* support group, the commission reported that there were approximately 433 to 613 *honhyorin* residing in Korea as of 1999 (D. Kim 2003:41).²² This study served as the basis for conducting further research and formulating policy measures for *honhyorin*. In the same year, HiFamily, a faith-based organization engaged in promoting family values organized a petition to abolish the term "*honhyorin*" from official documents, arguing that the stigma associated with the term constitutes a human rights violation (*Hankyoreh* 23 December 2003). Furthermore, HiFamily suggested that *honhyorin* be replaced with the term

²¹ Founded in 1986, by two Christian women's activists, Yu Pong Rim and Faye Moon, Durebang is a member organization within the umbrella organization of the Korea Church Women. In the early 2000s, Durebang was interested in a new project to create a childcare center for mixed-race children and wanted to find out the number of mixed-race children in the country (Park, 2013: 41).

²² The Pearl Buck Foundation founded in 1965 has been a major supporter of mixed-race children. Along with the Holt Foundation, it has helped to arrange overseas adoption of both Korean and mixed-race orphans.

“children of multicultural families,” hence introducing “multicultural family” into official lexicon for the first time (H. Kim 2010). Such civic organizations hence paved the way for heightened public discussions on the problem of mixed-race children in Korea.

Meanwhile, the outbreak of the 2005 race riots in France and in Australia later that year impressed upon Korean policymakers and intellectuals the need to properly address the question of mixed race and immigrant youth (Paik 2010:65). In October 2005, riots erupted in the French suburbs after two youth, Bouna Traore and Zyed Benna died of electrocution while fleeing from the police. Nearly three weeks of rioting left “some 10,000 cars burned, hundreds of public buildings damaged, around 3,000 people arrested with a state of emergency imposed in many areas surrounding major French cities” (Crumley 2012).

In Korea, the incident invoked fears of the high social costs associated with the failure to incorporate immigrant youth. In an op-ed, a sociology professor from Korea University wrote, “[o]ther countries should not view the riots in France as a matter of irrelevance...is there no possibility of a race riot in Korea? There is. It is time to review whether migrants in Korea are properly adjusting in Korea” (Hyun 2005). Similarly, a researcher of multicultural families from the KWDI notes, “[r]ight now there is a lot of excitement and relief that the rural areas are witnessing more children and schools reopening, but there are also worries about the long-term possibility that these children will not make it as far as college. This means that the rioting of dissatisfied immigrant youth that we saw happening in France as not a far-fetched possibility in Korea” (interview with Chang Mi-hye, 4 November 2011, Seoul). In short, the race riots in France and also in Australia that same year prompted public attention to issues of immigrant youth and mixed-race children in Korea.

During this time of increasing anxiety over issues of mixed-race immigrant youth and the possibility of future social conflict, the Korean government orchestrated a highly publicized media event around the visit of American football star Hines Ward in early April 2006. Hines Ward who had been born in Korea to an African-American father and a Korean mother was invited by the Korean government to visit Korea for the first time since he left as a baby. His visit came just after his team, the Pittsburgh Steelers had won the Super Bowl XL, and Ward had been named the Most Valuable Player (MVP). As the Korean media covered his every move during his visit, Ward was enthusiastically embraced as a national hero who served as a living example of what mixed-race children could achieve for Korea.

The media discourse surrounding Ward's visit reflected a particular way that the state and media envisioned a multicultural Korea, one that sought to re-fashion the public image of mixed-race people as "one of our own" (Ahn 2014:396, Seol 2005: 141). Ward's visit triggered widespread discussions that linked the past experiences of mixed-race people to the current generation of multicultural children in Korean society. Through Ward's visit, the Korean public was forced to remember and reflect on its past mistreatment of *honhyorin* on the one hand, and to imagine a future where they could imagine more Hines Wards that Korea could proudly claim as her own on the other hand. By fostering positive popular sentiment towards mixed-race people, Ward's visit provided the political momentum required to introduce policy measures for incorporating mixed-race children (M. Lee 2008).

Riding the wave of popular public opinion, the Presidential Committee on Social Inclusion (hereafter PCSI) under the Roh government announced two measures: the "Measures to Socially Integrate Female Marriage Immigrant Families" and "Measures to

Socially Integrate Mixed-Race Individuals and Migrants” on April 26, 2006 a few weeks after Ward’s media-frenzied visit. These two policy plans represent the Korean government’s blueprint for promoting an “open multicultural society” and “eliminating discrimination and promoting welfare” (H. Lee 2008). Although the aim of the policy was to promote a multicultural society, the policy itself did not embrace principles of multiculturalism, such as anti-discrimination and cultural rights for minorities. Rather, the focus was on preserving families by providing various educational and welfare services to the families of marriage migrant women and to mixed-race children. Because these policy measures have served as the foundational framework for incorporating marriage migrants and their children, they have been referred to as the “Grand Plan” (Ibid).

Although the Grand Plan is often regarded by many as a policy that represents the onset of multicultural policies in Korea, what is often overlooked is that the primary underlying purpose of the Grand Plan was to address the crisis of family by providing family-based welfare to marriage migrants and their children (H. Lee 2012). As early as 2004, the Committee on Population Aging and Fertility which was established by President Roh to formulate a policy response to aging and low fertility first suggested that integrating marriage migrants and their children into Korean society may serve to mitigate demographic problems (B. Lee 2009:786).

Another widely-cited report that was commissioned by the MHW in 2005 urged the need for a policy to incorporate migrant women, stating that “[e]specially at a time when the low birth problem has become a societal problem, *marriage migrants are contributing significantly to the continued survival of Korean society by giving birth to and raising a future labor force* [my emphasis]. Therefore, there is a need to devise a systemized infrastructure for providing support to marriage immigrant families so that

they can maintain a basic livelihood (Seol 2005: 336-7). ”²³ While policymakers did not actual believe that the influx of marriage migrants would compensate population decline, the demographic problem convinced policymakers that incorporating marriage migrants could be politically viable. According to Nora Kim (2007:74), “if the low fertility, rapid ageing problem did not exist, the Korean government would not have had the incentive to adopt a social integration support policy for marriage migrants and their mixed-race children.” In other words, policymakers justified the incorporation of immigrant women based on their capacity to contribute to Korean society by socially reproducing families and thus alleviate the population decline.

The Plan outlined the central and local governments’ commitment to addressing the social welfare needs of migrant women. These welfare provisions include basic livelihood assistance for families subsisting on income below the poverty level and monetary support for childbirth and childcare for low-income families. Furthermore, it aimed to foster the labor participation of marriage migrants by providing support for job training and employment skills, including computer education. It also aimed to develop a field where marriage migrants could be utilized as a professional labor force, specifically through a human resources and employment programs for multicultural education and welfare (PCSI 2006b:49). In addition to welfare support, the Grand Plan emphasized the development of education and information delivery programs for marriage migrants by strengthening collaborative efforts between government agencies. It also sought to

²³ The Ministry of Health & Welfare (MHW) commissioned the first national survey on marriage migrant women in 2005, which was based on in-depth interviews with marriage migrants, detailed how they arrived in Korea, their economic activities, marital and family relations, demands for social welfare, poverty levels, physical health and included comparative case studies of marriage migrants in Japan and Taiwan (Seol et al 2005).

increase public receptiveness to marriage migrants and their children through changes to public education curriculum that would foster the embrace of cultural diversity.

A second underlying purpose of the Grand Plan was to respond to pressures from civil society, mostly women's organizations that had been lobbying for policies to address the human rights abuses faced by marriage migrant women. A coalition of organizations supporting migrant women, including the Solidarity Network for Migrants' Human Rights and the Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center, had been urging government officials for policy measures to protect women who had become victims of trafficking and gender violence through the marriage brokering process (I discuss this in more detail in the next chapter). Media coverage of the violence experienced by marriage migrants, such as the 2003 death of a Filipina woman Bibi Rey Algana, who fell from her tenth-floor apartment after being beaten by her husband, had heightened public concern for the well-being and safety of migrant women (M. Kim 2010: 233). In response to these efforts, the Grand Plan called for the regulation of the marriage brokerage industry, including transparency and accountability in the process of marriage migration. It mandated the passage of legislation that would regulate the activities of brokers and revamped government efforts to crackdown on illegal activities that constitute human rights abuses against migrant women (PCSI 2006b:21). Not only would the state protect human rights by regulating the marriage migration process, it called for strengthening public support services for marriage migrants who are victims of domestic violence by providing funding support for the expansion of shelters and counseling services for marriage migrants.

Despite the public and media fanfare surrounding mixed-race children, the policy measures for *honhyorin* paled in comparison, revealing the government's intent to focus

on the children of marriage migrants, and signaling that the attention paid to *honhyorin* had merely served as a front to introducing social integration programs for multicultural children. The ‘Measures to Socially Integrate Mixed-Race Individuals and Migrants’ outlined separate measures for *honhyorin*, depending on their residential status, nationality, and perceived welfare needs. The plan distinguished *honhyorin* people according to three categories: 1) nationals and residents; 2) non-national overseas residents; 3) resident foreigners.

For *honhyorin* who are nationals and presently residing in Korea, policy measures stipulated expanded social welfare assistance to improve livelihood support. Overseas resident *honhyorin* refer to the children of Korean soldiers born to Vietnamese mothers during the Vietnam War, and the children of non-citizen Korean émigrés. Because they are non-citizens, these policy measures sought to explore the possibility of granting nationality and citizenship rights to this group. The last category referred to *honhyorin* residents with foreign nationality, namely mixed-race children whose parents are both foreign citizens. This category includes the children of foreign camptown sex workers as well as migrant workers.²⁴ Without revising citizenship policies but acknowledging statelessness among migrant children as a serious problem, the measures formally recognized the right of all children, regardless of legal status, to an education (PCSI 2006a:12).

The Act to Support Multicultural Families (Tamunhwa kajok chiwŏn bŏp)

These social integration policy measures created opportunities for Korean civic organizations to lobby for the proposal of three separate bills that would institutionalize

²⁴ In recent decades, Korean camptown workers had been replaced by the influx of foreign women, particularly from Russia and the former Soviet Union and from the Filipinas, many of whom had arrived in Korea on entertainer visas (Seol 2005).

support for marriage migrants, *honhyorin*, and migrants. On June 26, 2007, a little over one year after the announcement of the Grand Plan, the Committee on Women and Family within the National Assembly convened a public hearing to discuss three different proposals: the Act to Support *Honhyorin* Families, the Act to Support Multicultural Families, and the Act to Support and Protect Migrant Families.

First, the Korea Federation of International Families, a *honhyorin* organization had lobbied for legislation that would provide restitution to *honhyorin* and their mothers for the decades of exclusion and discrimination they had experienced. In providing testimony before the legislative committee, Bae Ki-cheol, the leader of the Federation depicted *honhyorin* as victims of the state's policies and demanded compensation. In his testimony, Bae argued, "we [*honhyorin*] have lived in this country: we were born here, with voting rights, and received an education here. Regardless of personal circumstances, whether material or personnel, we were born out of exchanges between two different countries. So we believe that it is time for the state to pay attention to our needs" (National Assembly 2007:17). While the legislators expressed their sympathies, they were uncomfortable with the idea of restitution and preferred to refer the issue to a separate committee that deals with matters involving historical reconciliation" (National Assembly 2007:20). Without significant public support, the bill for *honhyorin* failed to pass, and public attention to *honhyorin* declined thereafter.

Second, the other two proposed acts: the Act to Support Multicultural Families and the Act to Support and Protect Migrant Families had much in common except for the fact that the latter sought to include institutionalized support for all migrants, including undocumented migrants. Jung Gwi-soon from the Foreign Workers Human Rights Association (*Oegugin nodongja in'gwŏnŭr wihan moim*) which had lobbied for the

legislation for all migrant families pointed out that a strict definition would not be able to “realistically take into consideration all the problems of social integration faced by different migrants” (Ibid: 12). Instead, Jung pushed for a version of the support act that would include the families of undocumented workers, arguing that “to exclude illegal migrants entirely from any law is to lose the very human rights ideal contained in the law” (Ibid: 12- 13). Legislators however, were hesitant to include undocumented workers into the law, suggesting that there would be too much opposition against such a law.

As attention narrowed on the Act to Support Multicultural Families (hereafter Support Act), the legislative debates focused on how to legally define the multicultural family. The director of the family policy division within the Ministry, Yang Seung-joo articulated the Ministry’s position that the multicultural family is a family comprised of marriage migrants and their Korean spouses. Meanwhile, representatives from the Solidarity Network for Migrants’ Rights (*iju in'gwŏn yeondae*), an umbrella organization of pro-migrant groups argued that the definition was too restrictive and that such a law would prove to be discriminatory rather than beneficial to different migrant groups in the long-term.

The bill had the strong support of the MGEF as well as the Home Economics Association which had supported the Framework Act on Healthy Families. According to a staff member of Assembly member Koh Kyung Hwa who sponsored the Support Act, the MGEF saw the bill as an opportunity to expand the scope of family policies of which it was in charge (interview with Ha Mi-young, 26 April 2014, by phone). As of 2007, the Ministry was already operating 38 support centers for marriage migrants with the cooperation of civil society organizations, and it aimed to secure more funding that would allow it to expand the number of centers.

Amid unresolved disagreements over the definition of the multicultural family, the National Assembly passed the Act to Support Multicultural Families [Act No. 8937] on March 21, 2008 under a newly inaugurated government under President Lee Myung-bak. Similar to the Framework Act for Healthy Families, the purpose of the Support Act is “to ensure the stable family life of multicultural families and in doing so to foster their social integration” (Article 1). With a focus on preserving families and by extension, women as the main provider of social care and well-being, the legislation places heavy emphasis on providing counseling, education and informational support for migrant women. The underlying aim of the legislation is to sustain families formed of international marriages by providing various forms of public assistance, such as counseling and livelihood assistance to migrant women. Like the Framework Act for Healthy Families, the Support Act stipulates the creation of “multicultural family support centers,” as one-stop service centers for multicultural families.

Rather than invest in expanding welfare provisions through universal policies that extend entitlements to all multicultural families, such as childcare facilities and work-family policies that support women’s labor force participation, the Korean government instead opted to target foreign women by incorporating them into a new legal category called “multicultural families” (*tamunhwa gajok*). This strategy of incorporating women has resembled the state’s family planning programs which were executed by mobilizing the “voluntary” labor of women for rural development and population control. In explaining why the solution to the family crisis focused on the social integration of migrant women, anthropologist Kim Hyun-Mee (2007: 106-8) argues that it is because “foreign women are perceived (by policymakers) as the most easily mobilized resource to solve the family crisis and care-work burden facing Korean society.” Put differently, the

Grand Plan and the Support Act reveal policymakers' normative assumption that marriage migrant women are to provide the brunt of care work and reproductive labor for families in Korea.

Although the Lee Myung-bak government (2008-2013) sought to downsize the women's ministry, it nevertheless continued to expand multicultural family policies. Espousing the "747 plan," the Lee government focused on economic revival and ambitious development projects such as the Four Rivers Restoration Project, reminiscent of authoritarian governments of the past, and away from issues of social welfare and human rights, in contrast to his immediate predecessors.²⁵ Before taking office, Lee's transition committee announced in January 2008 that the new administration would abolish "leftist" agencies, such as the MGEF as well as the Ministry of Unification. President-elect Lee justified his decision to abolish the women's ministry that "based on statistical surveys, women themselves see the ministry as dominated by those who are only interested in women's power" and instead argued that women's interests would best be served if it were consolidated with the Ministry of Health and Welfare (Choi 2008).

Due to fierce protests from the opposition parties as well as from women's movement organizations, Lee soon recanted his decision, instead opting for a significant downsizing of the ministry that left its status within the government a precarious one. The downsizing resulted in the transfer of the family affairs division to back to MHW which was again renamed the Ministry of Health Welfare and Family (MHWF). The MHWF thus administered the Support Act for Multicultural Families from 2008 to 2010, and oversaw the initial expansion of multicultural family support centers. Meanwhile,

²⁵ The "747 plan" refers to Lee's campaign promise to restore Korea's economic growth rate to 7 percent annual growth, with a \$40,000 average per capita income that would catapult Korea as the 7th largest economy in the world.

continuing lobbying efforts by women's groups led to the reinstatement of the MGEF in January 2010, and the MGEF was once again assigned the task of implementing family policies, including multicultural family support policies. Since its reinstatement, the MGEF continues to remain the main government agency in charge of implementing family policies. Despite the downsizing of the MGE, the budget allocated for multicultural family support programs has continued to grow, experiencing an almost five-fold increase since 2008 [see Table 3.5 below].

TABLE 3.5. BUDGET FOR MULTICULTURAL FAMILY POLICIES, 2008-2014
(IN MILLION WON)

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
28,493	42,698	59,690	94,081	92,521	93,312	103,351

Source: National Assembly Budget Office, 2014

In sum, multicultural family support policies as an extension of family policies aim to incorporate migrant women as members of families through family welfare provisions aimed at preserving families. Unlike family policies that are concerned with women's employment, childcare, and work-family balance, healthy family policies in Korea focus on sustaining the normative ideal of family by regulating women's access to social services and benefits. In a similar vein, the underlying purpose of multicultural family support policies is to mold multicultural families into normative ones that are able to contribute to Korean society. Family policies have thus provided the institutional basis for incorporating immigrant women and their mixed-race children. Growing public awareness about racial and ethnic discrimination raised by civil society organizations focused on the experiences of previous generations of mixed-race children or *honhyorin* to foster a favorable political environment for policymakers to introduce policy measures to incorporate immigrant women and their children as members of families. At the same time, the introduction of family legislation to incorporate immigrant women has been

based on a narrow definition of “multicultural families” that has excluded the provision of public services to other migrant categories, including migrant workers whose families are not acknowledged as multicultural.

Mobilizing Women as Providers of Family Welfare

Through private-public partnerships between local governments and civil society organizations, healthy family and multicultural family support policies have demanded the participation of Korean women in providing family-based welfare for families. Both the Framework Act on Healthy Families and the Act to Support Multicultural Families delegate the duties of providing social services for families to civic organizations.²⁶

While these organizations are at liberty to develop initiatives specifically catered to the needs of local residents, they are required to provide the following services in exchange for government funding: 1) language education; 2) family education; 3) migrant women support groups; 4) counseling; 5) career development. In short, these support centers are meant to be “one-stop, full service” institutions that cater to the local communities while meeting nationally mandated objectives (KIHf, 2011).

Due to the government’s proactive support for multicultural families, the number of the centers has expanded rapidly since the first support centers were established by the MGEF in 2006. The Korea Institute for Healthy Families (KIHf), a quasi-governmental organization under the authority of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family has been in charge of overseeing the operation of multicultural family support centers since 2010. Between 2009 and 2011, the number of centers doubled from 100 to 201 (KIHf 2011).

Five years into the operation, there was a near ten-fold increase, defying the initial doubts

²⁶ According to Article 15 and 16 of the Support Act, the central and local governments can delegate their authority to non-profit organizations to carry out the responsibilities of designating and operating support centers and can subsidize the costs of fulfilling these activities.

of critics who expressed concerns that the MGEF lacked the capacity to execute such an expansion. As of 2014, there were 214 support centers located nationwide [See Table 3.5].

Table 3.5 Multicultural Family Support Centers, 2006-2013

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
21	38	80	100	159	200	200	212

Source: Korea Institute for Healthy Family (KIHf), 2013

While the policies do not specifically point to women's organizations, many non-profit civic organizations that operate the multicultural family support centers have been women's organizations. These organizations range from academic institutes to social welfare organizations to faith-based charitable groups. The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Korea for instance, has been a major partner entrusted with operating the support centers, and it was in charge of running 8 out of the 201 centers in 2011. Some centers are affiliated with major women's universities, such as Sungshin, Ewha, and Sukmyeong Women's Universities, which are all located in Seoul. Others are operated by women's movement organizations, including the Women's Hotline United, the Korea Family Legal Counseling Center, and the Women Migrants Human Rights Center. Women's organizations affiliated with the city or local government also operate the centers, such as the Women's Community Welfare Center (*Yŏsŏng bokchi sent'ŏ*), Women's Cultural Center (*Yŏsŏng munhwa wŏn*), and the Women's Human Resource Development Institute (*Yŏsŏng ilyŏkkaepalwŏn*).²⁷

Reminiscent of family planning agents who implemented the state's birth control directives at the ground level, social welfare providers have served as foot-soldiers who fulfill the aims of the state's family policies. Increasingly, the Korean government has

²⁷ The Framework Act on Women's Development which was passed in 1995 mandated that local governments develop and provide resources to encourage women's participation in all spheres of public life. One of these was the establishment of the Women's Human Resource Development Institute which provides both job training and career development resources for women through both free and paid services.

demanding the professionalization of the support centers by treating the centers as official social welfare organizations since 2009, and as a result, these centers have become staffed primarily by social welfare professionals. Social welfare as an academic and professional field in Korea, like it is elsewhere, has historically been dominated by women, where women compose approximately 75 percent of all social workers (KWDI 2011).

As of 2014, the KIHf reported that there were a total of 4,413 service providers working in the multicultural family support centers (*Yonhap News* 4 February 2014). The vast majority of these or 2,675 providers are home-visit tutors who teach Korean language to marriage migrants through regular visits to their homes. Regardless of which organizations are selected and funded to operate the support centers, women across the board constitute the vast majority of the 911 staff members and volunteers who make the day-to-day operations of the centers possible. Each center has approximately 4-5 full-time staff that provides care to multicultural families, along with a coterie of part-time or volunteer workers. Marriage migrant women are occasionally hired by the centers on an as needed, part-time basis as tutors and interpreters/translators for other migrant women (interview with a support center staff member, 7 September 2012, Geumcheon).

Recently, the Korean government has shown signs that it is moving towards consolidating the healthy family and multicultural family support centers into a combined center for all families which indicates a sign that the government does not intend to expand funding for family policies in the long-term. In 2013, 143 out of 207 centers were joint centers, an increase from 49 joint centers in 2011 (KIHf 2013). These combined centers rely on the manpower of “healthy family experts” (*kōnkangkachōngsa*), who are certified by the MGEF after taking a select number of university-level courses. An in-

depth study of healthy family support centers in Kyeonggi Province, which has the largest concentration of centers estimated that each center is staffed by about 4-10 people. Eighty-seven percent of these staff members are married women between the ages of 30 to 54 (J. Yang 2010:221). These staff members provide family counseling and support to families in need, and thus make it possible for local and central government agencies to monitor and intervene directly in the lives of individual families, monitor their reproductive activities and deliver services to families. In short, both healthy and multicultural family policies have structured opportunities for women to participate in the public provision of family welfare.

Women participate in sustaining the nationwide network of multicultural support centers not only as staff members but also as civic volunteers. Each support center works with a group of local volunteers through the Multicultural *Nanum* (Sharing) Volunteer Corp which fosters neighborly ties between marriage migrants and local residents by coordinating community building projects. In 2011, nearly 55,051 individuals participated in the activities of the volunteer corps (KIHf, 2011:24). Although there are no official figures by gender, many of these volunteers are middle-class housewives who are interested in helping migrant women adjust to life in Korea by serving as mentors to migrant women. Thirty-year-old Min-ju, a stay-at-home mom with a two-year old son decided to volunteer at the local multicultural family support center in Guri city (Kyeonggi Province) as a language tutor while her son was at daycare. Although she met with her tutee- a Vietnamese woman-only once every two weeks because of their busy schedules, she said “I enjoy volunteering because I am good friends with my tutee and we share many similarities including the fact that we enjoy being out rather than being holed up at home” (interview with Min-ju, 2 October 2012, Seoul).

A prominent ad campaign run by the Korea Broadcast Advertising Corporation (KOBACO) illustrates how public campaigns have mobilized women to support migrant women by appealing to their role of providers of maternal care.²⁸ In the ad, an older Korean woman (“Min-jae’s mom”) helps a Vietnamese neighbor (“Jun-ho’s mom”) read an announcement flyer sent from Jun-ho’s school. The ad ends by saying, “Because of your love, Jun-ho can grow up to be a proud son of Korea.” The message contains highly gendered scripts: an older Korean woman who through her maternal care and sense of civic duty helps a much younger Asian woman to learn the language and become Korean. Through neighborly maternal love, from one woman to another, a multicultural society can be realized. The take-away message is that the burden of incorporating migrant women rests with Korean women who are called upon to provide voluntary and underpaid care labor as neighbors, volunteers, and social welfare providers to ensure that the immigrant women are properly integrated into Korean society. In short, women have made the rapid expansion of family policies possible, and they have shouldered the burden of assisting migrant women so that these migrant women can become future providers of care for their families.

This chapter has discussed how previous patterns of incorporating Korean women into the nation through family planning programs have shaped the Korean state’s successive attempts at incorporating marriage migrant women as a response to population concerns. Despite the growth and expansion of the women’s movement and the institution of women’s policies, family policies in Korea have been adopted as a response to the national anxiety associated with the breakup and transformation of the family from

²⁸ Korea Broadcast Advertising Corporation (KOBACO), founded in 1981, is a government-affiliated public corporation that develops and implements projects aimed at promoting the advertising industry, including public service advertisements.

economic distress, changing social attitudes about marriage and revisions to the family law. In previous decades, the Korean developmental state placed the burden of welfare on women who were expected to engage in contraception and to provide child and elderly care. Like family planning, family policies have been formulated to regulate women's access to welfare and social rights through their roles as care providers for families.

Despite the expansion of women's policy aimed at gender equality, the women's movement was unable to effectively oppose the push by conservative groups, including faith-based citizens groups focused around reviving the traditional family, for family policies that mandating the state provision of family-based welfare. Soon after the institution of family policies, the Korean government extended family policies to include welfare support for multicultural families. As part of family policy, the multicultural family support policies serve to alleviate an impending demographic crisis by incorporating immigrant women in ways that demand their reproductive labor. In sum, the evolution of family policies from family planning in the 1960s and 1970s to healthy and multicultural family policies in the present-day reflects long-standing patterns of state attempts to regulate women's access to rights through their roles as primary care providers for families.

CHAPTER FOUR

Advocating migrant women: negotiating citizenship through human rights

“If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that *human rights are women’s rights and women’s rights are human rights* once and for all. Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely -- and the right to be heard.”

- The First Lady of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton,
1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing

Women’s activism, similar to women’s movements in Brazil and Argentina, played an important role in shaping the emergence of women’s democratic citizenship in Korea (S. Moon 2005, Jaquette 1994, Alvarez 1990). In the 1970s, Korean women participated in grassroots opposition to authoritarian rule and pushed for democratization. Since emerging as an independent autonomous movement following the transition to democracy in 1987, the Korean women’s movement has rallied around greater social, economic, political and civil rights for women (A. and H. Lee 2013, S. and K. Kim 2014). In particular, the integration of human rights into the movement’s agenda especially in the period after the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 and the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 has been one of the primary ways by which Korean women have sought to expand women’s rights (Peters and Wolper 1995, Keck and Sikkink 1998). The quest for women’s human rights in Korea has evolved around campaigns against sexual violence, domestic violence, prostitution, and most recently, in support of the rights of migrant women.

Not only in Korea, but women’s organizations elsewhere have been prominent advocates of immigrant women. In the U.S., women’s organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Immigrant Women Advocacy Project (NIWAP) have been increasingly vocal advocates of immigration reform and a path to

citizenship for undocumented women.²⁹ In Asia, organizations like Bethune House in Hong Kong and the TransAsia Sisters Association in Taiwan have supported migrant domestic workers and immigrant wives through legal counseling, advocacy and support services such as the provision of shelters for women who have been battered and abused (Hsia 2008).³⁰ Similarly, grassroots women's organizations in Korea like the Women Migrants Human Rights Center have advocated on behalf of migrant women since the early 2000s (H. Lee 2003).

In this chapter, I analyze the role of Korean women's organizations as intermediaries between the state and migrant women and their efforts to secure human rights protection for migrant women. On the one hand, by utilizing human rights, seasoned women's activists who had led prior campaigns against sexual and domestic violence, prostitution and trafficking were able to effectively push for government policies that integrated human rights concerns into the agenda. On the other hand, I argue that claiming human rights has had distinct consequences for women because they require articulations of gender and nationhood that work to reinforce gender hierarchies even as they provide protections and rights for women. In consequence, women's organizations have found themselves implicated in state efforts to incorporate women as mothers and wives in ways that reinforce the gendered ideals of motherhood and family that they have long sought to oppose.

²⁹ The National Organization for Women (NOW), founded in 1966 is one of the largest women's advocacy organizations in the U.S. The National Immigrant Women Advocacy Project is an advocacy group for immigrant women. In recent years, both groups have worked together to organize mass protests demanding immigration reform (*The New York Times*, 12 September 2013).

³⁰ Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge was founded in 1986 as part of the Mission for Migrant Workers, the oldest service provider in Hong Kong to provide assistance, shelter, and counseling to migrant workers. Similarly the TransAsia Sisters Association in Taiwan (TAST) was established in 2003 and provides support for community building among migrant brides in Taiwan.

The first section historically traces the institutionalization of women's human rights in Korea by discussing three defining campaigns in the broader women's movement where women's organizations have bargained for institutional and legislative change to enhance women's rights: sexual violence, domestic violence, and prostitution. In the second section, I situate the movement for migrant women's human rights as a continuation of the ongoing negotiations by the state and women's organizations over women's human rights. The following section examines the "price," or consequences associated with claiming human rights. Lastly, I revisit my theoretical framework to highlight the tensions between the promotion of human rights and a more inclusive, gender equal citizenship for women.

The Women's Human Rights Movement (*Yŏsŏng inkwŏn undong*)

In this section, I highlight the achievements as well as the setbacks of the women's human rights movement by focusing on the politics behind three major legislative developments: sexual violence (1994), domestic violence (1997), and prostitution (2004). Each of these campaigns reveal how the assertion of women's human rights has been contested by activists who have struggled to define what constitutes human rights and to determine the role of the state in preventing and punishing such abuses. In the case of domestic violence and anti-prostitution legislation, unresolved disagreements among activists have left deep scars and divisions that demonstrate the fragility of the consensus on women's human rights. Nevertheless, these earlier campaigns contributed to the institutionalization of human rights as women's rights in Korea which paved the way for integrating migrant women's human rights issues into the broader women's movement.

The Campaign against Sexual Violence (Söngp'ongnyŏk)

Women's organizing against sexual violence began when a group of women founded the Korea Women's Hotline (*Yösongŭi jŏnhwa*; hereafter KWH) in 1983, which along with Womenlink is regarded as one of the first grassroots women's organization.³¹ At the time of the founding, the KWH provided counseling to women workers on matters related to sexual violence, labor exploitation, and domestic abuse. The topic of sexual violence came to the forefront in the summer of 1986 after a student labor activist Kwon In-Sook was tortured, raped, and sexually assaulted by a police detective named Moon Gwi-dong, while being held in detention at the Pu'chon police station in Kyeonggi province (J. Nam 2000). Kwon, a college student from the elite Seoul National University had been arrested for working in a factory under a false alias.³² Known as the Pu'chon Sexual Torture Incident (*Bucheon söng gomun sagŏn*), this incident became the focus of public outrage because the detective who had raped and tortured Kwon was initially left unpunished.

The government's refusal to indict the accused policeman provoked women's groups led by the KWH, along with lawyers and religious organizations, to protest against the state's violence toward women and students. In response to the incident, women's groups formed two major coalitions, the Women's Council against Sexual Violence and the Joint Committee against the Pu'chon Sexual Violence Torture Incident that served as umbrella organizations in charge of coordinating protests against the authoritarian state's indiscriminate use of violence toward women. Korean women's

³¹ Women workers organized to form informal labor unions for women as early as the 1970s. However, they took on the character of labor organizations that promoted the rights of women as workers, rather than as women.

³² Many student labor activists in the 1970s and 1980s embraced *hyonjang-ron*, a theory of praxis, and sought to live by what they preached by working in the factories and engaging in labor struggle alongside the workers (N. Lee, 2007).

organizations recognized that the elimination of sexual and physical torture was closely intertwined with the need for democratic principles and institutions (J. Nam 2000:99). Backed by popular support, women's groups were successful in securing a trial for Kwon who was released in 1989 after serving thirteen months in prison. Upon her release from prison Kwon received monetary compensation from the government while her perpetrator was sentenced to five years in prison.

Despite the mobilization of women over sexual violence, the greater concern for activists at the time was not women's rights, but democratization. According to researcher Min Kyeong-ja (2013:25) who was an activist in the KWH during the 1990s, the KWH prioritized the pro-democracy movement like other women's groups at the time: "as the political situation and labor issues became problematized, issues related to women were regarded as one aspect of the wider structural problems confronting society at the time." In 1987, women's groups that had protested sexual violence joined together with other women's groups to form the Korea Women's Associations United (*Hankuk yosong danche yonhap*, hereafter the KWAU). The KWAU was formed of a coalition of twenty-eight organizations comprising women who were workers, religious leaders, researchers, housewives, rural women, and human rights advocates. Despite forming the coalition, member organizations within the KWAU were conflicted over whether women's issues should be subsumed under the cause of democratization.

On the one hand, defenders of "*minjung* feminism" argued that democratization aimed at social and political transformation was the only means to women's liberation, and thus feminists should join in student and labor activists' in their struggle for

democracy (Louie 1995, Hur 2011).³³ On the other hand, others were critical of the nationalist and male-centric character of the pro-democracy movement and argued that women's issues should be prioritized above all else (Kim 1996: 72). When the KWAU made the conflicted decision to join the democratization movement by becoming a member of the National Federation of Nationalist and Democratic Movements (NFDN; *Chun'guk Minjok Minju Undong Yonhap*) in 1989, a coalition to end the remnants of authoritarian rule, three member organizations withdrew from the women's coalition as a response to the controversial decision (S. Moon 2002:482). These conflicts reflect the growing divisions between reformists and militants within the nascent women's movement.

In the wake of the democratic transition in 1987, the issues of sexual violence continued to remain central to the women's movement. In 1991, feminist academics composed of professors and graduate students in the Women Studies program at Ewha Woman's University, the first and largest women's educational institute in Korea, established the Korea Sexual Violence Relief Center (*Hankuk sŏng p'ongnyŏk sangdamso*, hereafter KSVRC). According to feminist scholar Kyungja Jung (2013), the KSVRC was the first sexual violence counseling center founded specifically with a feminist purpose. This organization along with the KWH and the KWAU were pivotal in the establishment of legislation to prevent and punish crimes of sexual violence.

³³ According to Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, *minjung* ideology "posits that the central thread running through Korean history is the oppression of the laboring masses and that the true national identity of Korea can be discovered in the lives, culture, and struggles of the *minjung*- the locked out, the exploited, the down-trodden, the have-nots. Populist in character, the *minjung* movement includes students, intellectuals, workers, peasants, church activists, writers, cultural workers, and other democratic forces (Louie, 1995:418; Koo, 1987; Lee, 2007)." Meanwhile *minjung* feminism refers to the intertwining of the *minjung* and women's liberation movements which were led by women workers in the *minjung* struggle.

In the early 1990s, two highly publicized cases triggered the formation of a broad coalition of women's groups led by the KWH to push for legislation that would prevent and punish sexual violence. The first case occurred in January 1991 and involved a thirty-one-year-old housewife named Kim Bu-nam who was indicted for killing her neighbor, a man who had sexually assaulted her when she was nine. Depicting Kim Bu-nam as a victim of child sexual abuse rather than a murderer, various women's, human rights and faith-based organizations mobilized to campaign for Kim's exoneration, thereby bringing the issue of child sexual assault into the public gaze (Jung 2013:20). The second case took place a later year when Kim Bo-eun a twenty-one-year-old university student and her boyfriend Kim Jin-kwan, killed her stepfather who had repeatedly raped her since she was a child. Occurring shortly after the Kim Bu-nam case, this case led to a mass public campaign by those who supported the couple's exoneration of Kim and her boyfriend, including the mobilization of student groups.

While mass public support invigorated women's groups to push for legislation, they were highly conflicted over how to define sexual violence. On the one hand, the KWH which initiated the movement for legislation sought an expansive definition of sexual violence as any and all violence against women, including domestic violence. In other words, they sought to define sexual violence expansively as all gender violence. On the other hand, the KWAU and the KSVRC were hesitant about including domestic violence in the legislation out of practical concerns that doing so would detract public support given that mainstream society regarded domestic violence as an issue confined to the privacy of the family which the state should not meddle in (Min 2013:58, Heo and Rakowski 2014:228). Ultimately, the KWH gave into pressures to leave out domestic violence in the legislation against sexual violence which led to the successful passage of

the Act on the Punishment of Sexual Assault Crimes and the Protection of Victims in December 1993. Considered the first piece of legislation aimed at protecting women's human rights, this legislation contributed greatly to strengthening punishment for crimes related to sexual violence, expanding the definition of sexual violence, and establishing programs and policies, including counseling centers (or sexual assault centers) and shelters for victims of sexual violence.

The Campaign against Domestic Violence (Kajŏng p'ongnyŏk)

As soon as the National Assembly passed the legislation on sexual violence, women's activists led by the KWH organized around the unresolved issue of domestic violence, launching a three-year campaign beginning in 1994 to secure widespread public support. Jung Choon-suk, the policy director within the KWH helped to orchestrate a mass petition campaign that secured more than eighty-five thousand signatures in support of anti-domestic violence legislation (Kim 2013). Securing public support was not easy however. Jung recalls, "When we first held anti-wife beating campaigns in the streets, people's most common responses were that "battered women deserve it" or "people like that don't exist in this country" (quoted from Heo 2010:228).

Second, the framing and wording of the anti-domestic violence legislation posed a bigger point of contention for women's activists. Min Sook Heo (2010:229) argues that

"Korean feminist activists knew that they had to find realistic and practical strategies that did not revolve around unfamiliar philosophical positions or ideological definitions. For this reason, feminist activists deliberately decided to reinterpret the problem to make it more politically and culturally acceptable."

The reinterpretation of the problem resulted in the framing of domestic violence by activists as a threat to the family, where eliminating domestic violence served to preserve the family (*kajŏng yuji*). The reframing of domestic violence as a threat to the institution

of family paved the way for the passage of two landmark acts by the National Assembly in 1997: the Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Victim Protection, and the Special Act for the Punishment of Domestic Violence Crimes. The prevention act provides support services such as counseling for victims, while the special act stipulates punitive measures to perpetrators of domestic violence.

At the implementation stage however, women's activists were sorely disappointed to find that the legislation had significant shortcomings when it came to preventing and punishing domestic violence. For one, some activists criticized the legislation for its inability to properly punish and incarcerate the perpetrators of violence because the preservation of the family was prioritized over women's individual rights. By providing counseling and protection for perpetrators, the law aimed to reintegrate them into the family rather than focus on exacting punishment for criminal behavior (Heo 2010, Heo and Rakowski 2014).

Another shortcoming was that the legislation led to the proliferation of government-funded agencies and shelters that aimed primarily to dole out services to women according to government guidelines rather than seek creative ways by which to empower or protect women. Organizations like the KWH were being bypassed and denied funding over non-feminist organizations that sought to implement government programs without a feminist purpose. To this day, the elimination of domestic violence continues to be a prevalent social issue that has remained at the top of women's movement agenda. In 2010, the MGEF reported that more than 53 percent of married couples between the ages of nineteen and sixty-five experienced some form of domestic violence in the past year (MGEF 2010:16).

The Anti-Prostitution Campaign (Sŏng mae mae)

Beginning in the early 2000s, the focus of the women's human rights movement shifted away from domestic violence to the issue of abolishing prostitution. Although the Korean government has formally outlawed prostitution since 1961, it has been no secret that Korea has a sizable sex worker industry, much of it associated with military camptowns, both American and Korean (Lee 2008, K. Moon 1997, Lie 1995). Although local women's groups have supported prostitutes working in the military camptowns, there was no concerted effort by the women's movement to seriously confront the problem of prostitution until this time.

Two factors emerged to bring prostitution to the forefront. The first was a series of brothels fires from 2000 to 2002 that led to the tragic deaths of brothel workers who were trapped inside the buildings when the fires broke out. In 2000, five sex workers who were locked inside a brothel were killed when the building caught fire in Gunsan city (S. Cheng 2011). A year later a second fire broke out in Busan, killing three women, and in 2002, another accidental brothel fire in Gunsan killed 13 people, including 11 sex workers. In the wake of these tragedies, the personal stories of these women became known when the media published excerpts from the diaries of the women that were found in the ashes left from one of the fires, sparking public interest in the problem of prostitution.

The second factor that brought public attention to prostitution in Korea at the time was the U.S.-led initiatives against global human trafficking (Cheng 2011). Around the time of the brothel fires, the U.S. Department of State released the 2001 Trafficking-in-Persons (TIP) Report. This report accorded a Tier 3 ranking to Korea based on its failure to fulfill the minimum standards for combating trafficking. Under Kim Dae Jung (2003-

2008), the Korean government which touted human rights as a part of the national agenda regarded the low ranking as an embarrassment and sought to rectify the problem by actively supporting grassroots women's struggles against prostitution. In 2001, the KWAU in conjunction with several other civic organizations including Saewoomtuh, an organization formed by ex-student activists in 1996 to provide support services for prostituted women, formed the National Solidarity against Prostitution (hereafter National Solidarity). This movement worked closely with the MGEF to lobby for anti-prostitution legislation by introducing new discursive frames to understand women's victimhood in prostitution. Interestingly, activists articulated prostitution by equating it with trafficking (*insin mae mae*) and therefore depicted it as a self-evident violation of women's human rights (Cheng 2011:485). Once it was framed as anti-trafficking, widespread support for abolishing prostitution gained momentum among a broad range of social activists.

This convergence between women's activists who framed prostitutes as victims of trafficking coerced into prostitution by pimps, traffickers and criminals on the one hand, and state leaders who desired to improve Korea's standing on anti-trafficking on the other, led to the swift passage of the Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts and the Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof in March 2004. The legislation stipulated the creation of a Center for Women's Human Rights (*yosŏng in 'kwon sentŏ*) and counseling centers for victims of prostitution which aimed to foster the prostitutes' "re-integration" into society. Regarded as a major achievement in the women's movement, the acts were introduced with the explicit goals of protecting women's human rights and of meeting global initiatives against the sex trafficking of women.

To the surprise of women's activists however, the passage of the law resulted in major prolonged protests by sex workers who demanded an immediate repeal of the law. As the Korean government engaged in mass crackdowns on red-light districts leading to the arrest of thousands of sex workers and their clients, sex workers began to organize protests and hunger strikes in front of government buildings (*Jukan Korea* 22 December 2004). In October 2004, nearly 3,000 sex workers staged a demonstration outside the National Assembly building opposing the anti-prostitution legislation. Demanding the right to work, these sex workers protested against punitive measures within the legislation that treated them like criminals who deserved punishment and like victims of trafficking who needed state protection. Furthermore, they argued that the law would be detrimental to them by forcing the industry further underground. In response, sex workers organized to create the National Solidarity for Sex Workers (*Hanyeoyeon*) which demanded recognition of the problems they faced as issues of labor rights rather than trafficking.

Despite these mass protests by sex workers, neither the women's movement organizations nor the MGEF took the sex workers seriously, dismissing them as "misguided" and as women who were being manipulated by their pimps (Cheng 2011a, 2011b). Yet, the unwillingness of the women's movement to engage the demands of sex workers contributed to a growing divide between abolitionists and more radical feminists who supported the sex workers' cause (S. and K. Kim 2014:55). A younger group of feminists, the Sister Network, saw these protests by the sex workers as an opportunity to shift the debate on prostitution away from criminalization and trafficking to discussions about how to empower sex workers. Although these feminists pushed to seek a new frame for discussing prostitution, mainstream women's activists have refused to acknowledge that sex work is work and to this day refuse to consider the possibility of

repealing the anti-prostitution legislation (S. and K. Kim 2014, Cheng 2011). The divisive and unresolved debates among feminists in Korea over whether regulation or abolition is the best approach to the problem of prostitution echoes debates elsewhere, including in the U.S. Since the passage of the law, the sex industry has continued grow and even diversify since the institution of the anti-prostitution law. While the number of red-light districts has decreased, the MGEF reported in 2010 that the number of hostess bars and room salons³⁴ increased to 31,623 from 28,757 in 2007 and the number of massage parlors also increased to 5,271 from 3,360 in 2007 (*Joongang Ilbo* 10 December 2012).

In short, the backlash against the anti-prostitution legislation and the subsequent growth of the sex industry signals major unintended consequences of women's organizing against prostitution in the name of human rights. While women's activists sought to improve human rights for women in prostitution, by treating prostitutes as either victims of trafficking or as criminals without efforts to distinguish between prostitution and trafficking have worked to condone state-led crackdowns on prostitution which have left women in prostitution more vulnerable than ever. In short, the controversy surrounding prostitution demonstrates that claiming human rights has consequences that do not necessarily enhance all women's rights.

**Feminizing Migrant Issues:
Migrant Women's Human Rights (*iju yŏsŏng inkwŏn undong*)**

During the anti-prostitution campaign, women's organizations first began to pay attention to migrant women when activists uncovered that foreign women comprised a

³⁴ Room salons refer to higher-end drinking establishments where customers are entertained by female hostesses who serve drinks, provide conversation as well as song and dance. Oftentimes, the evening will end with a "round 2" (*yi cha*) where the hostesses are paid extra to spend the night with the customers.

growing number of entertainers working in the American military camptowns. Sealing Cheng (2004:194), an anthropologist who conducted research on Filipinas in Korea estimated that in 1999, there were approximately 600 Filipina women working in the camptown sex industry. Furthermore, a study conducted by the MGEF reported that 5,500 foreign women had entered Korea on an E-6, or entertainer visa in 2002, where 2,596 were from Russia (Seol 2004:3).

From the beginning, the Korean government has been involved in regulating the influx of foreign women as sex workers. In 1996, the Korea Special Tourism Association (KSTA) an association of clubs owners near the U.S. military bases started recruiting foreign women and securing entertainer visas for them (Ibid:9). In 1999, the Korean government amended the entertainer license system by requiring club owners as well as entertainment companies to receive certification from the Korea Media Rating Board, a quasi-governmental organization. Through this system, more foreign women arrived in Korea, especially from the former Soviet Union, who quickly replaced Korean women as the majority of camptown entertainers.

Migrant women were not only entering Korea as entertainers and sex workers, but also as low-skilled industrial and service workers as well as the spouses of rural Korean men. According to estimates from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the number of female migrant workers regulated by the Employment Permit System (EPS) was 38,788 in 2006, or about 36 percent of all migrant workers (J. Jung 2009:36). The number of women migrant workers has tended to vary by ethnic group and by sector. For instance, the proportion of female workers for Korean-Chinese and Chinese have tended to be around 45 percent, while only around 35 percent among Southeast Asians (H. Lee 2003:136). The type of work has differed too: most migrant women workers tend to be employed in

the service sectors, such as restaurants, domestic work and hospice care. In 2006, among migrant workers in the service sector, 74 percent were women (J. Jung 2009:91).

Beginning in the late 1990s, an increasing number of foreign women arrived in Korea as brides of Korean men due to the proactive efforts of local governments and commercial brokers in promoting international marriages as a response to the rural bachelor crisis. From 2000 to 2008, the number of foreign women marrying Korean men grew nearly five-fold, from 6,945 in 2000 to 28,163 in 2008 (NSO, 2008). In 2005, the number of international marriages constituted nearly fourteen percent of all marriages registered in Korea in that year. The majority of these wives have been from China (including ethnic Koreans from China) and Vietnam. In 2012, 42 percent of all marriage migrants originated from the People's Republic of China, while 27 percent were from Vietnam (KIS, 2012).

The entry of foreign women is part of a broader ongoing phenomenon of migration into Korea since the late-1980s (Lim 2003, Lee and Park 2005). In the late 1980s, the Korean economy began to experience acute labor shortages in several labor-intensive sectors, including but not limited to agriculture/fisheries, manufacturing, and construction. As greater numbers of migrant workers entered Korea as “industrial trainees,” civil society actors began to raise the issue of nonpayment of wages, mistreatment, and exploitation experienced by the migrant workers.³⁵ The migrant worker advocacy movement began in 1994, when fifteen migrant workers waged a sit-in protest for twenty-nine days at the headquarters of the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice

³⁵ Instituted in 1991 and modeled off of the Japanese program, the Industrial and Technical Training Program for Foreigners (ITTP) imported foreign workers as trainees who were denied labor rights. Korean firms with a foreign subsidiary or affiliate were allowed to bring trainees into Korea. In 2003, the government instituted the EPS or Employment Permit System which granted labor rights to workers, but regulates the entry and movement of migrant workers through contracts that limit their period of stay to under five years and limits the number of times workers can change workplaces.

(CCEJ), a prominent civic organization, demanding payment of their overdue wages and workers compensation for industrial accidents (N. Kim 2012, D. Kim 2011). A year later, thirteen migrant workers from Nepal led to another mass protest at Myeongdong Cathedral a symbolic site of previous labor struggles during the pro-democracy movement. During this protest, migrant workers received the support of thirty-eight Korean civic organizations which established an umbrella organization called the Joint Committee on Migrants Korea (JCMK), launching the migrant worker advocacy movement. The protest led to the growth in the number of migrant labor support organizations from about 30 in 1994 to 90 in 2000 (Seol, 2002:4). Since then, a broad range of organizations have provided support services, including counseling, language classes, negotiating with employers to secure wages and compensation, and advocating for policy and legislative change.

For women's activists, there was a growing realization that pro-labor civil society activists within the migrant advocacy movement were not prioritizing issues of gender; thus women's activists set out to create an independent movement focused solely on migrant women. The first of these efforts can be traced back to when the Korea Church Women United (*Hankuk kyohoe yosong yonhaphui*; hereafter KCWU) opened the first counseling center for migrant women workers in 1996. In the 1970s, the KCWU had been active in protesting against "sex tours" (also known as "kisaeng" tourism)³⁶ by groups of Japanese men in Korea and it remained involved in protesting sexual violence as active supporters of the *chongsindae* (or so-called comfort women) movement (K.

³⁶ Kisaeng refer to Chosun-era (1392-1910) courtesans or entertainers.

Moon 1997, Lie 1995).³⁷ The Women's Church (*yosong kyohui*), another faith-based women's organization founded in 1989 to eliminate gender discrimination within Protestant churches established a center for migrant women workers in Namyangju city in 1997. A coalition specifically for advocating migrant women was created in 2001 when three organizations, the Anyang House for Migrant Workers (*Iju nodongjaeui jip*), the Gumi Migrant Worker Counseling Center (*Oegugin nodongja sangdamso*), and the Busan Association for Migrant Workers Human Rights (*Oegugin nodongja in'gwŏn moim*) came together to form the Solidarity Network for Migrant Women's Human Rights (*Iju yosŏng in'gwŏn yondae*, or Solidarity Network).

The basis for the founding of the Solidarity Network came from the recognition that civil society needed to pay special attention to migrant women because in many cases the human rights situation for women was far worse than for men. For instance, a civic organization, the Action Committee for the Human Rights of Migrant Workers, revealed in 2003 that more than 10 percent of migrant women workers had experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence in the workplace (Yang 2003). According to the Solidarity Network, "[C]ompared to migrant men, women are not aware of their rights. They are often dependent on male workers in that they are not proactive in demanding their rights and in seeking counseling and help...therefore the support of civil society organizations and women's organizations is essential for improving the situation facing migrant women" (Solidarity Network 2002). Thus, what began as attention to foreign

³⁷ The comfort women movement for redress was supported by a coalition of women's organizations led by the KCWU and the Korea Council on the Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan. This movement forged a transnational alliance with women's activists in other parts of Asia as well as Latin America and Europe and was pivotal in raising the issue of militarized sexual slavery as a violation of women's human rights (Soh, 1996; Moon, 1997).

women in prostitution quickly expanded to addressing the plight of women migrant workers and marriage migrants.

The Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center

Founded in 2001, the Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center (*Hankuk iju yŏsŏng in'gwŏn sentŏ*, hereafter Center) has been the main organization leading the coalition for migrant women. Reverend Han Kuk-yeom, the founder of the Center studied theology at Hanshin University, a private Protestant university, with the dream of becoming Korea's first female pastor. Upon marriage and after giving birth to her daughter, she left for Germany with her husband, the Reverend Choi Eui-pal, in 1988 to undertake graduate studies. After returning to Korea three years later, she assisted her husband who headed the Cheongam Church in Seoul while serving in leadership positions with the Korean Association of Women Theologians (KAWT) and the Women's Committee of the Korean National Council of Christian Churches (KNCC) where she was pivotal in raising the issue of sexual violence in the pastoral community (interview with Han Kuk-yeom, 29 February 2012, Seoul).

Han Kuk-yeom's interest in migrants can be traced back to 1997 when eight undocumented Chinese workers, seven of them women, came to her church seeking refuge and protection from the immigration police. Han was appalled by how the workers had endured terrible working conditions for years: they had been locked up and sexually harassed, with no compensation for their labor. This chance encounter led Han Kuk-yeom and her husband to create the Seoul Foreign Workers Center (*Seoul Oegukin Nodongja Sent'ŏ*, hereafter SFWC) in 1997. While some advocacy organizations provided refuge for migrant workers at the time, there was no separate space where migrant women could feel safe. A few months later, Han created the House for Migrant Women (*iju yŏsŏng eui*

jip) within the SFWC as a response to the need of shelters for migrant women workers, especially pregnant women.

For Han, the absence of shelters for migrant women was indicative of a larger problem: the failure to address gender issues in relation to migration. She was frustrated by the fact that most advocates of migrant workers, including her husband lacked sensitivity to gender issues when dealing with the problems faced by migrant workers. Even though her husband was sympathetic to the feminist cause, Han noted that “there were limitations to how much [he] could empathize with and care for the needs of migrant women” (interview with Han Kuk-yeom, 29 February 2012, Seoul). As a result, Han decided to go her own way when she founded the Women Migrant Human Rights Center as an organization independent from the SFWC in 2001. According to Han, the organization was named the Women Migrants Human Rights Center in English instead of the Migrant Women Human Rights Center because she wanted the emphasis to be on women. Increasingly, as more migrant wives arrived throughout the 2000s the clientele shifted from workers to marriage migrants. Founded with the purpose of empowering migrant women by advancing their human rights, the Center has “served as a model for all migrant women support organizations, including those sponsored by the government (interview with Han Kuk-yeom, 29 February 2012, Seoul).”

Over the past decade, the Center has come to be well respected within the activist and scholarly community. It has led several campaigns to support the human rights of migrant women, including campaigns against domestic violence, racial/ethnic and gender discrimination, and commercial marriage brokers. To promote the empowerment of migrant women, the Center established a variety of programs, including domestic violence counseling, human rights education, and Korean language programs. Focused on

empowering migrant women, the Center has emphasized the importance of counseling, leadership and community development. It has operated a domestic violence counselor training program for migrant women who are encouraged to become advocates of other migrant women. According to its monthly newsletter, the Center receives on average two hundred calls per month from migrant women requesting some form of counseling from advice on visa issues to assistance in resolving family conflicts. In addition to family and domestic violence counseling, the Center has provided legal assistance on matters related to naturalization, legal status, and divorce by partnering with public interest law firms such as Minbyun and Gonggam.³⁸ Annually, the center receives an average of about 1,500 visitors seeking its services.

In addition to Seoul, the Center has five regional centers that are independently operated by local women's activists in Busan, Daegu, North Choongcheong (Cheongju), South Kyeongsang (Jinju), and North Jeolla (Jeonju) provinces. In order to coordinate activities, the directors of the regional offices travel to Seoul at least twice a month to meet with the other regional directors; they also hold annual retreats and workshops to strengthen the solidarity ties between the regional centers. The Seoul center has eleven staff members, with three full-time Korean activists and a migrant activist. Hired on a part-time basis, migrant women with training in domestic violence prevention provide counseling by phone or in-person. Four Korean activists operate a shelter for women in a location that is undisclosed to the public. In terms of total membership, it is estimated that there are at least 150 dues-paying members, consisting of women's activists as well

³⁸ Minbyun, or Lawyers for a Democratic Society is an influential social organization founded in 1988 by progressive lawyers to advocate human rights and democracy issues. Gonggam, founded by the Beautiful Foundation a major civic organization in 2002, is a public interest law firm that focuses on issues related to the human rights of refugees, migrants, North Korean defectors and disabled people.

as students and volunteers who are sympathetic to supporting migrant women's human rights. The majority of the Center's funding comes from the Social Chest of Korea (*sahoe gongdong mogeumhoe*), which is a major grant provider for non-governmental, non-profit organizations in Korea since 1998.

In addition to Han Kuk-yeom who continues to serve as the director of the Center, the staff members at the Center come from feminist backgrounds with experience working from within the women's movement. Kang Seong-euy who served as managing director (*samoojang*) at the Center from 2008 to 2013, began her career as a sexual violence counselor on Jeju Island. She majored in women's studies in the early 1990s when sexual violence consumed the focus of the women's movement. Upon completing her master's degree in women's studies, she became a sexual violence counselor and was asked to head the sexual violence counseling center by the Jeju branch of Womenlink (*yŏsŏng minuhoe*) where she worked for four years. She then moved to Seoul where she worked for about three years at the Seoul Women's Human Resource Development Institute (*yŏsŏng nungryok gaebal won*) which is a public-private organization that promotes job training and women's employment under the authority of the Seoul metropolitan government.

Kang was recruited to work for the Center by another staff member who was also from her hometown of Jeju. When she first began working at the Center, Kang notes: "I was surprised by how many migrant women there were in Korea. When I heard of their stories, I realized that we were talking about another kind of discrimination here, one that went beyond gender. It seemed that there were many layers to this discrimination- it wasn't just about gender and class, but also about race, ethnicity, and nationality. So I

became interested in seeing what I could do to make a difference” (interview with Kang Seong-euy, 30 October 2012, Seoul).

The Center has been a powerful force in the migrant women’s movement in part because it has worked in coalition with a wide variety of other advocacy organizations. For one, the Center has represented the interests of migrant women to the broader women’s movement as a member organization of the KWAU. Activists like Han Kuk-yeom and Kang Seong-euy have relied on their extensive ties to women’s movement activists to bring attention to migrant women, including from feminist scholars. Within the KWAU, the Center members have participated actively in the annual policy summit meeting and Women’s March held every year on International Women’s Day (March 8). As a member of the KWAU, the Center contributed to the drafting of the country report submitted to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), where it brought attention to human rights issues such as domestic violence, marriage brokers, and the unstable legal status of migrant women in Korea (KWAU 2011). In its protests against domestic and sexual violence, the Center has worked closely with organizations like the KWH, which has helped to promote the expansion of counseling centers and shelters for migrant women.

The Center is a migrant advocacy organization (*iju danch’e*) as well as a women’s organization (*yŏsŏng danch’e*). as a member organization of the Joint Committee of Migrants in Korea (JCMK), It has maintained close ties to migrant worker advocacy groups such as the Migrant Trade Union (MTU), a labor union organized by migrant workers, and the broader Solidarity Network for Migrants Human Rights (*iju inkwon yeondae*) which is a coalition of the migrant worker and migrant women’s organizations.

The following is a list of organizations that has worked in coalition with the Center [see Table 4.1 below].³⁹

In 2003 when the progressive Roh Moo-Hyun government came into power, migrant women's advocacy organizations found a powerful ally that was responsive to its calls for attention to migrant issues. Committed to continuing on the initiatives begun by the previous Kim Dae Jung administration (1998-2003), Roh's "participatory government" (*chamyo jeongbu*) demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with civil society organizations (*simin danc'he*) by appointing an unprecedented number of former activists into the government (S. and K. Kim 2014). Most important to women activists was the appointment of Chi Eun-Hee, a former leader of the KWAU to the Ministry of Gender Equality in 2003. For the KWAU which historically had been a political oppositional force, the appointment marked a historic milestone and a fundamental shift in the movement's relationship with the state to a more cooperative one.

Notably, the inclusion of former activists and pro-women leaders into the highest echelons of power signaled the rise of "femocrats." Femocrats refer to feminists or women activists who enter state bureaucracies as a way of inserting feminist concerns into public policy agendas (Eisenstein 1995:69). These feminists-turned-bureaucrats were favorably positioned to serve as "brokers" between the state and the women's movement (S. and K. Kim: 12).

³⁹ The Center often organizes protests and events around coalitions. Depending on the specific issue or incident at hand, the members of these coalitions are subject to change. For instance, if an incident involving a migrant woman occurs in Daegu, then the Center organizes a protest in coalition with a variety of women's, human rights, and faith-based organizations based in Daegu.

TABLE 4.1
LIST OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MIGRANT WOMEN'S
ADVOCACY COALITION

MIGRANT WOMEN ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Korea Migrant Women Human Rights Center (<i>Hankuk iju yŏsŏng inkwŏn sent'ŏ</i>) (South Gyeongsang, Taegu, Pusan, South Cholla, North Cholla, Ch'ungbuk branches) -Korea Migrant Women Voters Alliance (<i>Hankuk iju yŏsŏng yukwŏncha yŏnmaeng</i>)* -Gangseo Yangcheon Migrant Women's House (<i>Kangsŏ yangch'ŏn ijuyŏsŏngŭijip</i>) -Ansan Migrant Women's Counseling Center, Blink (<i>Ansan ijuyŏsŏng sangdamso</i>) -Korea Migrant Women's Association (<i>Hankuk iju yŏsŏng yŏnhaphoe</i>)* -Talk to Me* -Transnational Asian Women's (TAW) Network* -Migrant Women Human Rights Forum (<i>Iju yŏsŏng inkwŏn porum</i>) -Solidarity Network for Migrant Women's Human Rights (<i>Iju yŏsŏng inkwŏn yŏntae</i>)
MIGRANT WORKER ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Solidarity Network for Migrant Workers' Human Rights (<i>Iju nodongja inkwŏn yŏntae</i>) -Joint Committee on Migrant Workers (<i>Oekukin iju nodongja taech'aek hyŏpŭihoe</i>) -Migrant Trade Union (<i>Iju nodongja nodong johap</i>) -Solidarity with Migrants (<i>Iju gongdong haengdong</i>) -Association for Migrant Workers Human Rights (<i>Oeguginnodongjain'gwŏnŭrwihanmoim</i>) -Window to Asia (<i>Ashiaŭich'ang</i>) -Suwon Migrants Center (<i>Suwon ijumin sent'ŏ</i>) -Jeju Migrant Peace Community (<i>Chejuoeguginp'yŏnghwagongdongch'e</i>)
WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inchon Women's Hotline, Ulala (<i>Inch'ŏn yŏsŏngŭi chŏnhwa Ullalla</i>) -Korea Women's Hotline (<i>Yŏsŏngŭi chŏnhwa</i>) -Korea Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan (<i>Hankuk chŏngsintae munche taech'aek hyŏpŭihoe</i>) -Womenlink (<i>Hankuk yŏsŏng minuhoe</i>) -Korea Women's Association United (<i>Hankuk yŏsŏng tanch'e yŏnhap</i>) -Women with Disabilities Empathy (<i>Changae yŏsŏng kongkam</i>) -Korea Disabled Women's Union (<i>Yŏsŏng changaein yeonhap</i>) -National Solidarity Against Trafficking (<i>Sŏngmaemae munje haegyŏrŭrwihan jŏn'gunn yŏndae</i>) -Korea Sexual Violence Relief Center (<i>Han'guk sŏngp'ongnyŏk sangdamso</i>) -National Association of Domestic Violence Counseling Centers (<i>Chŏn'guk kajŏng p'ongnyŏk sangdamso hyŏbŭihoe</i>)
HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Human Rights Sarangbang (<i>In'gwŏn undong sarangbang</i>) -Korea Center for UN Human Rights Policy (KOCUN) (<i>UN in'gwŏn jŏngch'aek sent'ŏ</i>) -Gonggam (<i>Kongik inkwŏn pŏpchaetan gonggam</i>) -Apil (<i>Kongik pop sent'ŏ Apil</i>) -Solidarity for Anti-Discrimination Legislation (<i>Ch'apyŏl kŭmchipŏp chechŏng yŏntae</i>)

*self-organized by migrant women

Thus, under the Roh administration, negotiation and cooperation shaped the relationship between the women's movement and the state.

Capitalizing on the favorable political environment, migrant women's advocacy organizations began to lobby the MGEF to fund support programs for migrant women. As an activist with extensive ties within civil society and the government, Han Kuk-yeom at the Center was critical in bringing attention to migrant women. For two years, Han pressed upon Minister Chi Eun-hee with whom she had worked together in the KWAU and the Korea Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan, to consider instituting programs for migrant women (interview with Han Kuk-yeom, 29 February 2012, Seoul).

These efforts paid off when the Ministry instituted its first program for migrant women in 2004 when it commissioned six organizations including the Center, to create language textbooks and guidebooks on maternal care for marriage migrants. The other organizations included in this project were the Incheon Women's Hotline, Choongbuk Women Migrants Human Rights Center, Jeonbuk Women Farmers Association, Changwon Women's Hotline, and the Busan Women's Association. The Ministry allocated funding support to these organizations over a five year period beginning in 2005 with a hundred million won (approximately US\$1 million) grant from a major conglomerate, the Amore Pacific Corporation (formerly known as Taepyeongyang Chemicals). The project marked the first official government support program for migrant women (K. Han 2009).

Despite their close cooperation with the government in developing programs for migrant women, many of the concerns of advocacy organizations were overlooked when it came to policy decision making. Activists like Han Kuk-yeom had been deeply

involved in discussions with officials from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Labor who had sought out their advice, and they had harbored high hopes that the government would integrate their concerns into the policy agenda. Yet, when the Roh government revealed its “Grand Plan” in April 2006 as discussed in Chapter Three, it was evident to activists that the policy neglected many of their concerns. According to one activist, it was as if the government had “used civic organizations as sources of information, but disregarded their concerns” (interview with an activist, 13 October 2011, Seoul).

In June 2006, a coalition of advocacy organizations consisting of the Center, KWH, the Solidarity Network for Migrants Human Rights, the International Organization for Migration (IOM-Seoul), and Gonggam hosted a discussion forum to criticize the government’s “Grand Plan” for integrating marriage migrant families which was announced in April 2006. During this forum, Kim Min-jeong, an activist and the policy director of the Solidarity Network, expressed concern that the policy requires more specific and professionalized content without which it would lose effectiveness (M. Kim 2006:56). Another advocacy activist and human rights lawyer, So Rami, shifted the attention to marriage brokers, arguing that “the current system of international marriage brokering is structured by an unequal gender hierarchy, where the ultimate victims are women” (So 2006:12). The heaviest critique came from Han Kuk-yeom who stated that

“this policy treats marriage migrants as objects of protection who receive education and welfare, and it fails to see women as active agents. Marriage migrants do not exist for the sake of the family. The family should exist for the women. If not, migrant women will continue to be marginalized and become sacrificial lambs for sustaining traditional gender ideals. The only win-win strategy is to establish a policy that does not subordinate women to the family but treats them as individuals within the family” (Han 2006:10-1).

In short, the institution of policy brought out the divergent perspectives between activists and government officials.

The Price of Human Rights

Echoing earlier campaigns for women's rights, women's organizations have been mobilized around promoting the human rights of migrant women. On the one hand, by organizing their activism around the discourse of human rights, women's activists have made migrant women a highly visible minority to whom extraordinary public attention has been paid. The public awareness about the difficulties faced by migrant women presents a stark contrast to previous generations of Korean women who married foreigners and gave birth to mixed-race children and were shunned by mainstream society (M. Lee 2008, K. Park 2013).

Moreover, migrant women's advocacy groups have successfully secured incremental reforms to immigration procedures and regulations that aim to guarantee the legal status of migrants. Not only that, they were instrumental in developing the initial educational and support programs for marriage migrants to assist them with their adjustment to life in Korea. By bringing attention to the myriad problems associated with an unstable legal status, migrant women's organizations like the Center were pivotal to securing reforms to the nationality law in 2004 that instituted simplified naturalization procedures and extended employment rights to migrant spouses. Furthermore, they successfully pushed for reforms to the anti-domestic violence legislation to include non-citizen marriage migrants as subjects of legal protection and services in 2006.

On the other hand, the demand for human rights has distinct and oftentimes unintended consequences for those whose human rights are claimed and protected (Choo 2013, Cheng 2011). For one, human rights require local activists to "vernacularize" them

by linking them with localized and often gendered ideas that may facilitate the re-articulation of national identity and ideals of femininity (Merry 2006). In her critical study of the anti-prostitution movement in Korea, Sealing Cheng (2011) demonstrates how human rights for women in prostitution were articulated as anti-trafficking which made all prostitutes into trafficked women who have been victimized by criminals.

In the case of marriage migrants in Korea, human rights were articulated through multicultural family support policies that mandate state responsibility to protect migrant women, based on gendered ideas about women's roles in the family. In other words, migrant women have been depicted as deserving of human rights protection not because human rights are universal but because migrant women belong to families and provide an important function as reproducers and care providers in those families. Because both the state and civil society can appropriate human rights discourses for their own agendas, claiming human rights requires an examination of how human rights discourse translates into legal and policy reform, and what kind of impact these institutional changes have on women. Below, I identify four major "costs" associated with claiming human rights for migrant women.

Migrant Women as Victims

First, the articulation of human rights relies on the construction of migrant women as victims whose human rights have been violated. In the case of marriage migrants, the campaign against marriage brokers illustrates how the treatment of migrant women as victims resulted in legislation that regulates marriage brokering but fails to protect the needs of marriage migrants in the brokering process. As a result, gross human rights violations in the process of brokering have continued in spite of increased regulation.

Perhaps the greatest driving force behind marriage brokerage has been the local governments that have supported the efforts of rural bachelors to find foreign wives through commercial brokers. As early as 1996, local rural governments instituted a “Farmers and Fishermen Bachelors’ Marriage Project” (*nongŏch'on ch'onggak changga bonaegi undŏng*) which provided monetary subsidies for local bachelors to find wives (C. Freeman 2011, H. Lee 2008). For instance, as early as 1996, the Naju city government in South Cheolla province began to offer approximately US\$4000 in assistance to offset costs for weddings to ten rural bachelors beginning (*Yonhap News* 20 August 1996). While such government programs did not aim specifically at international marriages and included support for domestic marriages, by 2007 more than sixty local governments were supporting rural bachelors to find foreign wives by offering some form of subsidy (Cheng 2011:1639). These subsidies were used to offset expenses incurred from hiring the services of marriage brokers.

In addition, the brokerage industry grew significantly after its deregulation by the central government. In 1998, the Korean government reformed the Family Rites Act (*kachŏngŭilyee kwanhan pŏplyul*), by no longer requiring commercial marriage brokers and introduction agencies to have a license or register with a local authority (G. Han and Seol 2006:245). Due to the deregulation, commercial brokers grew exponentially, and by 2005, there were approximately 2,000 brokerage agencies offering their services (Ibid). Because these enterprises rely on introduction fees which are paid out only in the case of a successfully arranged match, brokers have been competitively intent on producing as many couples as possible through the active recruitment of prospective brides for their male clients. To win over as many clients as possible, brokers have used slogans such as: “Marry a Vietnamese Woman. First, second marriage, and disabled men are all welcome”;

“no age limit”; “only 7 days from meeting to wedding”; “they [foreign brides] will never run away” (H. Yang 2011).

Beginning in the early 2000s, advocacy organizations began to problematize the practices of marriage brokers when they uncovered through testimonies from migrant women that brokers employed deceitful and sometimes coercive practices during the process of recruiting and matchmaking. Brokers often did not truthfully reveal accurate information about the prospective grooms that would be disadvantageous to a successful match, hiding mental health, physical disabilities, incomes, marital history, and level of education (H. Kim 2009). Furthermore, many women had been lured to meetings with the Korean men under false pretenses and held in debt bondage if they tried to back out of the arranged meetings with men. Alarmed activists characterized these practices as violations of human rights that were reminiscent of “trafficking” (*insin mae mae*) and “commercialized marriage” (*mae mae hon*) (Cheng 2011:1639).

Public attention began to focus on the problem of marriage brokers when a major progressive newspaper, *Hankyoreh*, came under fire in 2005 after publishing an advertisement for a marriage brokerage. Stating that “the advantages of a Vietnamese bride- her bloodline is similar to ours, she follows the custom of serving a single husband, and devotedly takes care of her husband; unlike Chinese and Filipinas, her body odor is pleasant,” the advertisement prompted protests from women’s groups and ordinary readers who found it highly offensive and discriminatory (Paik 2011:136).

To add insult to injury, another media incident provoked public concerns over how migrant women were being portrayed within Korean society. A conservative daily, the *Chosun Ilbo* published an article in April 2006 titled, “The Land of Dreams: Korea” that detailed the exploits of Korean marriage brokers in Ho Chi Minh. Rather than focus

on the fact that these brokers were actively engaged in brokering which is illegal in Vietnam, the article focused on how Vietnamese women fueled the demand for brokers because they desired to come to Korea in order to achieve the “Korean dream.” In the article, a group of Vietnamese women were photographed along with the caption that read: “women eagerly waiting to be chosen by their “Korean prince” (Chae 2006).

Furthermore, the article prompted an escalation of diplomatic tensions between Korea and Vietnam when a Vietnamese newspaper *Tuoi tre*, got wind of the article and filed an official complaint with the *Chosun Ilbo* demanding that it retract the article and extend a formal apology to the Vietnamese people (Chae 2006). The state-run Vietnamese Women’s Union called for a crackdown on brokers active within Vietnam, while the Korean ambassador in Vietnam was forced to make a public apology on behalf of the Korean government. Due to the protests from Vietnamese diplomatic officials who expressed their dissatisfaction over Korea’s treatment of Vietnamese women, marriage brokerage in Korea attracted both national and international attention at this time.

Moreover, the controversy sparked the mobilization of a wide range of civic organizations in protest against the activities of marriage brokers. On May 20, 2006, more than fifty people consisting of Vietnamese students, workers, and housewives supported by the Center, and the KWH organized a street protest against marriage brokers. At this protest, one Vietnamese marriage migrant noted,

” As a Vietnamese woman who is married to a Korean man, the advertisements by marriage brokers were demeaning and humiliating to me. These advertisements treat Vietnamese women like commodities who can be bought at any price, where any Korean man can buy a pretty and young Vietnamese bride” (Nam 2006).

In July 2006, the Center and its coalition partners formed the Action Committee against Discriminatory Advertisements by International Marriage Brokers and submitted

a formal petition to the National Human Rights Commission to prohibit the use of offensive advertisements by marriage brokers.⁴⁰ In a press release, the Action Committee argued,

“Thoughtless advertisements that blatantly commodify women in order to expand business profits are actions that violate the human rights of women and should be stopped immediately. This problem not only violates the human rights of women from other countries, it violates the human rights of all women by fostering prejudice and discrimination against women. Also many advertisements glorify Korea by denigrating and purposefully distorting the native cultures of the migrant women. These problems can foster more prejudice towards people who become our family members through international marriage” (So 2006).

The tragic death of a Vietnamese woman further supported the growing calls for imposing government regulations on marriage brokers. On July 4, 2007, nineteen-year-old Huan Mai was found dead in Cheonan in South Choongcheong province, after being beaten to death by her husband. In a fit of rage, the husband had beaten Huan Mai until eighteen of her ribs were broken. It was later discovered that the broker who had arranged the marriage had hidden the husband’s mental health problems from Huan Mai. The Huan Mai case received extensive media coverage for its shocking brutality and prompted the Korean public to reflect upon the ramifications of their complicity in promoting international marriages. In the husband’s sentencing, the presiding judge released the following statement,

“This criticism should not be focused solely on the accused. Rather, this case reflects the immaturity of our society as a whole. It comes from our arrogance in importing foreign women as if they were tools for resolving the marriage problem of rural bachelors. It also comes from our recklessness in thinking that a man and a woman living together, even if communication is impossible between them, is a marriage. Thus our foolishness inevitably sowed the seeds of this tragedy. Through this case, we must heartbreakingly confess our incivility trapped inside

⁴⁰ Participating groups include: You &Me (Vietnamese student organization), women’s committee of the Democratic Labor Party, Gonggam (public interest law group), Sister Network (feminist group), Korea Women’s Hotline United, Migrant Women Human Rights Center.

the false façade of a civilized, economic powerhouse of the 21st century” (Daejeon High Court 2008, K. Han 2009).

In the aftermath of this case, migrant women’s organizations revamped their efforts to demand attention to the problems of domestic violence in cross-border marriages, the irresponsible practices of commercial brokers and the ill-preparedness of Korean spouses.

Such sentimental eloquence however, has worked to construct migrant women as pitiful victims of deceptive brokers and abusive husbands who deserve public sympathy. By stressing the horrific abuses experienced by migrant women, advocacy organizations reinforced the stereotype of all migrant women as victims of sexual and domestic violence. A policy aide to National Assembly member Kim Choon-jin who sponsored the Regulation Act notes that the advocacy organizations “successfully raised attention to the issue (of migrant women) in a very short period of time. However, because they are so focused on “battered women” they ended up steering attention away from other aspects of the problem. The problems faced by marriage migrants are multi-faceted, but it has become reduced to one thing: battered women (*mae matneun yōja*)” (interview with Yoo Kyeong-sun, 14 August, 2012, Seoul).

The unilateral portrayal of migrant women as victims robs them of their agency and situates them as those who cannot be anything but victims. According to human rights lawyer So Rami of Gonggam, a leading public interest law organization, the Korean government does not “view migrant women as rights-bearing individuals (*kwōnli chuch’e*), but as policy targets (*daesang*)” (interview with So Rami, 2 December, 2011, Seoul). While it is true that many migrant women have been victims, to treat all migrant women as such fails to acknowledge that the experiences of migrants vary, and that women exercise agency even in the most oppressive situations.

Feminist ethnographic studies of migration have stressed the different degrees of agency that women exercise in the migration process (Freeman 2011, Constable 2005, Piper and Roces 2003). While cross-border marriages have been regarded as a reflection of structural economic inequalities between countries and a coercive patriarchal practice for migrant women, Piper and Roces (2003:11) have countered the one-sided portrayal of international marriage as oppressing women by arguing that in some cases migrant spouses can “benefit from international marriages in a way same-nationality wives do not.” Contrary to dominant perceptions, not all women are “sold” into marriage or deceived by brokers. Many women opt for marriage migration for economic as well as non-economic reasons. For instance, in the early 1990s, hundreds of Filipina women married Korean men through the Unification Church, which actively promoted interracial marriages as a religious practice. In short, treating migrant women as victims of deceitful brokers and abusive husbands fails to adequately recognize the agency of migrant women.

Moreover, the wholesale treatment of migrant women as victims creates “unwarranted blurs” between different categories of migrant women (Constable, 2006). Nicole Constable (2006:2) has pointed to the dangers of treating all migrant brides, domestic workers, and prostitutes as ‘trafficked’ women; doing so reinforces negative stereotypes about migrant women and neglects attention to the varying circumstances by which women migrate. In particular, Constable takes issue with the depiction of migrant brides as trafficked women. According to Constable, the failure to take the different circumstances and perspectives of women into consideration has resulted in misguided legislation like the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act which was passed by the U.S. Congress in July 2003. Because the legislation presumes and conflates foreign brides with victims of trafficking and introduction agencies with human traffickers, the

legislation is unable to adequately address the problem of domestic abuse faced by some foreign brides.

Similarly, the Act to Regulate Marriage Brokerages (Regulation Act) passed by the Korean National Assembly in 2007, which has been directed at policing and administering to the activities of commercial brokers, treats migrant wives as victims who must be protected through state regulation. According to the act, brokerages are required to register with a local government, and brokers located abroad must abide by the local laws of the country where they conduct business. As critics point out however, increased state regulation has not been effective in policing the activities of commercial brokers nor in diminishing human rights abuses. Migrant women continue to be exposed to high rates of gender violence, especially domestic violence. From 2007 to 2009, the Emergency Hotline for Migrant Women reported that the number of domestic violence incidents doubled from 1,674 to 4205 cases. Although migrant women compose less than two percent of the total female population in Korea, migrant women comprised eight percent of the total deaths due to domestic violence in 2014 alone, where seven migrant women died at the hands of their Korean husbands (Gonggam 2014).

The legislation to regulate marriage brokers have been ineffective because for one, there is no way to protect women victimized by unregistered agencies. According to the NGO shadow report submitted to the UN CEDAW in 2011, it was estimated that only about 400 out of more than 1,300 brokerages are registered. Second, there is no way for the Korean government to control the illegal activities of brokerages located abroad, even in countries where brokering is considered illegal (KWAU 2011). Third, while local governments are in charge of implementing the Regulation Act, they are the very ones sustaining the demand for brokerage agencies by offering subsidies for unmarried local

men who wish to seek the services of a marriage broker. Thus, local governments have very little incentive to crackdown on the activities of marriage brokerages.

The State as Male Protector: heightened state surveillance

Second, in mobilizing around migrant women's human rights, women's organizations have looked to the state as the male protector, which has provided "protection" through increased state surveillance on migrant women and their bodies. Political theorist Wendy Brown (1995) has argued that the portrayal of women as helpless victims can lead to the legitimization of the state as their protector which paradoxically enhances state power to exert more controls on women and their sexuality. In Korea, the institution of multicultural family support policies has been accompanied by heightened state efforts to keep detailed statistical records on migrant women. Since 2005, the Korea Immigration Statistics (KIS) bureau within the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) has published highly detailed statistical data on immigrant women (*kyorhon iminja*), including data on country of origin, visa-type, gender, geographic location, and nationality status.

Additionally, the Act to Support Multicultural Families mandates a fact-finding survey to be conducted every three years by the MGEF in order to re-evaluate policies for multicultural families (Article 4). The first national survey on multicultural families published in 2009 reports statistical data on multicultural families, including nationality status, age, income, Korean language ability, employment, life satisfaction, children, and marital relations (MHW, 2009). In order to conduct this survey, government officials and researchers treat marriage migrants as objects of research who are constantly called upon to provide information not only on vital statistics but personal anecdotes for evaluating the effectiveness of state policies. Ting, a marriage migrant described her frustration with

being called upon by strangers to provide information about her experiences in Korea: “I receive calls all the time from reporters, local officials, and acquaintances requesting personal interviews with me. I feel like I have become some guinea pig for an experiment that is constantly poked and prodded” (interview with Ting, 27 June 2012, Seoul).

The state uses the information it has gathered to implement and evaluate government programs, and also to maintain surveillance on the lives of migrant women. Through the multicultural family support centers, which keeps detailed records on multicultural residents in the vicinity, the local and central governments are able to keep track of the movement and activities of multicultural families, including the number of children they have, their language ability, and marital status. The home-visit language program (*pangmun kyoyuk*) for example dispatches private language tutors employed by the multicultural family support centers to the individual homes of multicultural families, which allows the support centers to intimately monitor the lives of migrant women. In this case, the private homes of multicultural families have become sites of state surveillance over migrant women.

In addition to increased monitoring of migrant women, the government has instituted measures to fortify the border by tightening requirements for potential migrant women who wish to apply for spousal visas. Beginning in April 2014, the Ministry of Justice instituted new procedures that require marriage migrants to demonstrate basic proficiency in Korean by passing at least the first level on the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK) before they are issued a spousal (F-6) visa. Additionally, men who wish to invite foreign spouses to Korea must also earn at least 14.8 million won (approximately US\$13,500) a year. In the year following the new regulation, the Korean embassy in Vietnam reported at the number of visas granted to Vietnamese women fell

from 5,708 to 2,967 in 2014 (*Chosun Ilbo* 25 April 2010). In the name of protecting migrant women, the state has thus made it more difficult for migrant wives to secure a legal status in Korea through revamped border controls.

Service Provision at the Cost of Advocacy

Third, increased state intervention in the name of human rights not only heightens state surveillance on women, it has also worked to structure opportunities for civic organizations to shift the focus of their activities to service provisions. In March 2008, the National Assembly passed the Act to Support Multicultural Families which mandated local governments to establish government support centers for multicultural families, a task that could be delegated to civic organizations. As the legislation does not restrict the type of civic organization that can provide services to multicultural families, a wide range of organizations from faith-based to social welfare organizations have sought to secure government funding by offering programs for multicultural families. Since continued government support is contingent on the demonstrated impact that these organizations bring to the local communities, these organizations have oriented their activities toward maximizing their reach and influence through a competitive struggle to secure as large a clientele pool as possible.

From the moment they enter the country, marriage migrants are guided through a streamlined process where government and civil society organizations bombard them with information on the variety of resources and educational programs that are made available to them. Beginning with the local immigration bureau where migrant women first visit to register and receive their foreign resident registration cards, they are directed to the local multicultural support center where they are given orientation information and taught Korean language and practical things like how to open a bank account and how to

navigate the public transportation system. At the local support center, they are provided guidebooks on family life and cultural etiquette which have been translated into the native languages of the migrant women. One advocacy activist described how marriage migrants have responded to the explosion of services: “Because there are so many programs that marriage migrants can choose from, they end up “shopping” for programs and services by going from organization to organization benefit from free events such as medical check-ups and family outings” (interview with an activist, 11 November 2011, Seoul).

On the one hand, the expansion of government-run centers has afforded migrant women more options and greater conveniences in seeking out services to assist with their settlement and adjustment in Korea. Since all the centers offer the same basic services, marriage migrants are able to take language classes at a nearby local center, or if they are unable to travel, request the services of tutors who offer private language lessons by visiting their homes. Hung, a Vietnamese marriage migrant who lives in Guri city, a commuter city located outside of Seoul in Gyeonggi province, decided to visit the multicultural family support center near her home in Guri rather than commute over an hour to an advocacy organization in downtown Seoul. She notes, “the Guri city government operates a library for multicultural children and my son really likes to go there” (interview with Hung, 24 August 2012, Guri). With the convenience of such facilities right in their neighborhoods, growing numbers of marriage migrants do not feel the need to venture far to seek support services from specific advocacy organizations

On the other hand, as the number of government-sponsored multicultural family support services and centers has grown, advocacy organizations have become marginalized. From the perspective of advocacy organizations like the Women Migrants

Human Rights Center, which used to be the only provider of support for migrant communities only a decade ago, the expansion of government-run services is likened to a competitive free market struggle for more clientele. Anthropologist Han Geun-Soo notes that “competition between government and civic organizations gives rise to inconvenient relations in which the “customers are snatched away unilaterally and the operations disrupted” (G. Han 2007:51, Kim 2006:25).

Women’s organizations engaged in advocacy are not immune from the competitive pressure because many of them also rely on central and local government funding to sustain their organizations, such as the Women’s Hotline which provides counseling and shelter services to abused migrant women. While advocacy organizations have attempted to remain focused on empowerment, they find it difficult when the social environment demands civic organizations to deliver service provisions. A Korean activist at the Center remarks:

“We must focus on women's empowerment especially because other places are focused on service delivery. Our focus on empowerment is how we differentiate ourselves. The people who work here are in principle dedicated to empowering women, but because Korean society these days emphasizes service provisions, we also are unable to focus solely on empowerment. To do so, we need the societal resources to be able to promote empowerment, without which we are forced to compromise by focusing on service provisions” (interview with Heo-Oh Young Sook, 12 June 2012, Seoul).

Despite these efforts, advocacy activists have expressed frustration that many people are not able to discern the difference between advocacy organizations and multicultural family support centers based on the services they offer. The distinction is further blurred by the fact that some advocacy organizations, like the Choongbuk Women Migrants Human Rights Center, has received local government funding to carry out multicultural family support programs. In short, the overall impact of the expansion of

state policies on the advocacy movement has been demobilization: “Before the government got involved, advocacy groups were able to foster tight coalitional ties and work together. With the expansion of both advocacy and service provision-oriented organizations, there are too many voices and clashing interests to reach a consensus. Everyone thinks they know what is best so there is no sense of unity and direction in the movement” (interview with Heo-Oh Young Sook, 12 June 2012, Seoul).

The emphasis on service provision over advocacy is not unique to the migrant women’s movement, but is a common story for grassroots women’s organizations in the face of increased state intervention in Korea and elsewhere. In her study of women’s NGOs in Latin America, Sonia Alvarez (2009) notes that women’s movement organizations have become more like professionalized service providers that are subcontracted by the state, in contrast to the grassroots feminist organizations that operated more organically and informally in previous decades. Prior campaigns for women’s human rights in Korea experienced parallel shifts as the expansion of state support for sexual and domestic violence counseling centers, led to the increase in non-feminist, government-affiliated organizations whose interests were mostly focused on program implementation rather than advocacy.

As of 2012, there were 165 sexual assault centers (SACs) and 18 shelters, with 10 centers specializing in child sexual assault cases. Kyungja Jung (2014:89) notes that “[f]unding, particularly from the state, has played a pivotal role in changing feminist practice in terms of the organizational structure, the prioritization of activities, and the depoliticization of feminist practice.” Subject to government scrutiny in exchange for continued funding, these sexual assault centers are forced to abide by directives and goals that are imposed from the top-down. Instead of focusing on advocacy, the organizations

have directed their attention to securing and fulfilling specific short-term government projects that seek to demonstrate the impact of state funding rather than long-term transformative change such as shifts in societal views on sexual violence. Moreover, government funding has not only forced feminist organizations to compete against each other, it has also changed the very grassroots nature of the organizations by demanding increased bureaucratization.

Reproducing Patriarchy

When the state takes on the stance of a paternal provider by offering protective services to women in their capacity as wives and mothers, deeply entrenched patriarchal ideals of womanhood are not only left unchallenged but reinforced. For instance, support policies for multicultural families have prioritized the interests of the family over individual women. The emphasis on support services have been on maternal health and child care programs that assist with childbirth and childrearing, where migrant women are encouraged to receive support so that they become proper mothers to their Korean-born children.

In the *Guidebook for Living in Korea* published by the MGEF for marriage migrants, the government reinforces traditional beliefs about prenatal care and motherhood with scripts like:

“Koreans have long believed that the behavior and mentality of the mother during pregnancy affects the baby mentally, emotionally and physically. This approach to prenatal care is called “*Tae-gyo*.” Based on traditional beliefs, the pregnant mother should take precaution in every action she takes, refrain from foul thinking and harsh actions, and talk and act in a relaxed manner in order to give birth to a healthy child” (MGEF, 2014: 146).

Patriarchal ideals about motherhood are thus reproduced when the state propagates and imposes traditional beliefs about childbirth and childcare onto immigrant women.

In their efforts to claim human rights as women's rights, activist women have ironically implicated themselves in fostering a gendered and nationalist project of making Korean mothers and wives out of migrant women, in ways that goes against the very principles of gender equality that they have long struggled for. Additionally, activists have not posed a challenge to immigration and family policies that seek to incorporate migrant women based on the fulfillment of their wifely and mothering duties. Nor have they posed an effective challenge to citizenship policies that condition the membership of migrant women on their domesticity and reproduction (Cheng, 2011: 1641).

Instead, women's activists have relied on existing institutional frameworks such as anti-domestic violence legislation to push for exceptions to be made for migrant women who have become victims of domestic violence. Ultimately, such requests for exceptions have minimal impact when migrant women's legal status continues to be premised on their dependent status on men. These assertions do not come from a universalism that all migrants deserve protections and legal rights, but from specific gendered understandings of a woman's role in the family: as mothers who provide care for their husbands and their children. In effect, human rights as articulated by civil society and the state have gone hand in hand to reassert traditional ideals of motherhood and family and thereby reinforce patriarchy.

This chapter has discussed how negotiations of human rights by women's organizations have expanded legal rights and protections for migrant women. In Chapter Two, I presented a framework of citizenship as a negotiation by the state and women over membership and rights that has unintended and contradictory consequences. In this case, mobilization over human rights by women's organizations has unintended consequences which have inadvertently relied on the depiction of migrant women as victims who

require state protection and surveillance based on patriarchal ideals about womanhood and family.

Broadly, the migrant women's movement echoes earlier women's movements against gender-based violence that mobilized over human rights in their promotion of women's rights. While successful at securing public support and formal institutional changes, women's mobilization over human rights has time and again proven to be inadequate when it comes to undermining the patriarchal ideals that underlie women's citizenship. Through enhanced state protection of women, the negotiation of human rights has reinforced patriarchy while providing a space to acknowledge the vulnerability of women.

As a result, migrant women continue to be subject to high rates of gender violence as well as gender inequality where their rights are not universally ensured but conditional on the fulfillment of patriarchal ideals. Similarly, the limitations of the movement for migrant women indicate that human rights as the basis for negotiating citizenship has unintended consequences that neither fully protects nor empowers women. The next chapter turns to the strategies that women's organizations have encouraged migrant women to adopt in order to negotiate their membership and rights.

CHAPTER FIVE

Citizenship as a Paradox for Marriage Migrants

One of the first things that Koreans want to know when they meet a marriage migrant is whether she has naturalized. Marriage migrants are the only category of foreign-born, non-ethnic migrants in Korea who are encouraged and furthermore, expected to naturalize. To Koreans, naturalization is an indicator that the marriage migrant has become a genuine “Korean bride” who intends to fulfill her role as a dutiful wife and mother. On the other hand, marriage migrants who do not naturalize are regarded as those whose sincerity and commitment to their families are suspect. For older generations of Koreans who still adhere to the Confucian ideal of *ch'ulkaeoin*, the normative assumption is that married women are no longer members of their natal family but of their husband's family (Gelb 1994, Kendall 1996).⁴¹ For cross-border marriages, this translates into the belief that as a member of the husband's family the migrant bride should also hold the same nationality.

For marriage migrants however, citizenship acquisition is not a symbol of filial duty or commitment but the only method of securing a legal status in the face of immigration policies that make it difficult to reside in Korea with a non-citizen status. While the spousal visa (F-6) grants employment and residency rights to noncitizen spouses of Korean nationals, it is a precarious and temporary legal status because the visa must be renewed every year. Moreover, at each application for renewal, the Korean spouse is required to serve as a legal guarantor (*sinwŏnpochŭngin*). Without the sponsorship of the Korean spouse, marriage migrants are unable to apply for visa

⁴¹ The Confucian saying refers to the notion that married daughters who have left the natal family are outsiders and no longer members of the family.

extensions, citizenship or permanent residency. The dependent status of marriage migrants means that their legal status is one that can be easily revoked at the whim of the Korean spouse. As a human rights lawyer from the public interest law group Gonggam notes,

“[m]any of the problems are exacerbated by the fact that the (migrant) woman cannot do anything about her legal status without her husband’s help. So in the case of domestic violence, it will go unreported because the woman is afraid that she will lose her visa status in the event that the exposure leads to a divorce” (interview with So Rami, 2 December 2011, Seoul).

For marriage migrants then, Korean citizenship is the only way to have an independent legal status. When asked why she would not divorce her husband who had physically hit her on multiple occasions during their altercations, one marriage migrant who held a spousal visa explained her predicament: “I can’t divorce him because I don’t have citizenship in Korea. If I divorce him, I may be deported to the Philippines and I can’t go back to the Philippines because divorce is illegal there” (interview with Jackie, 19 June 2012, Seoul).

Marriage migrants not only prefer naturalization as a protective measure against abuses from their spouses, but also because it resolves the inconveniences of maintaining a foreign resident status in Korea. While foreign residents with valid visas can apply for a foreigner registration card (*oekukin dŭngnok chŭng*) which serves as legal proof of identity, the lack of a citizen registration number causes many challenges for foreign residents in their day-to-day lives. Many activities such as opening banking and cell phone accounts, making purchases online, and getting tax receipts require having a citizen registration number. Although many places now recognize foreign resident numbers in lieu of the citizen registration number, the lack of a citizen registration

number continues to incur huge inconveniences for foreign residents in ways that make it more beneficial to acquire a citizen registration number if possible.

For some migrant women, the very ordeal they must endure in order to maintain a foreign legal status is an incentive for naturalization. Because the spousal visa is only valid for one year, marriage migrants must visit the immigration office to renew the visa. Moreover, they must apply for the visa at the immigration bureau located in the jurisdiction where they initially registered their permanent address. For migrants who have moved to a different city or do not live particularly close to an immigration bureau, the trip to renew the visa can be a day-long affair. Furthermore, the visa renewal process requires that marriage migrants be physically accompanied by their husbands who must serve as their legal guarantor. A marriage migrant from Vietnam explains why she naturalized: “[m]y husband kept complaining about having to visit the immigration office every year. It was a huge inconvenience for him because he had to ask for a day off from work in order to go to the immigration office with me” (interview with An, 3 August 2012, Seoul). Thus, marriage migrants opt for Korean citizenship in order to avoid the myriad difficulties and inconveniences of maintaining a precarious and dependent status.

In 2004, the National Assembly revised the Nationality Act to introduce “simplified naturalization” (*ganyi gwih’wa*) requirements for certain categories of people, including spouses of Korean nationals. According to the revised Nationality Act, marriage migrants qualify for simplified naturalization if they meet the following conditions (see Table 5.1 below):

TABLE 5.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR SIMPLIFIED NATURALIZATION

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be a legal adult (19 years of age or older)• Must have good moral conduct• Must have the ability to maintain living on his/her own• Must have basic knowledge of language, customs and culture befitting a Korean national• Must have maintained marriage status and kept residence in Korea for the past 2 or more consecutive years; OR Must have maintained marriage status for 3 or more consecutive years and kept residence in Korea for at least 1 year

In contrast to the five year residency requirement for all other foreign nationals, the simplified naturalization procedures allow marriage migrants to apply for naturalization after two consecutive years of residence in Korea.

Following the revision, the number of naturalizations by marriage migrants has increased steadily. According to figures from the Korea Immigration Service (KIS), more than 91,609 marriage migrants acquired Korean nationality from 2002 to 2013 (KIS, 2002-2013). The Korean government reported a record high in the number of naturalization in 2009 when 25,044 individuals acquired Korean nationality [see Table 5.2 below]. Of these, 17,141 or 68 percent of all approved naturalizations that year were applications from marriage migrants. By 2013, the number of marriage migrants who naturalized that year had declined to 9,021, but marriage migrants comprised an even larger proportion at 80 percent. These figures indicate that marriage migrants constitute the largest category of foreign residents who are acquiring Korean citizenship and becoming new citizens in Korea.

TABLE 5.2 NATURALIZATIONS BY MARRIAGE MIGRANTS, 2002-2012

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Naturalizations	1,734	5,339	5,768	8,419	3,344	4,190	7,916	17,141	10,271	10,733	7,733

Source: Korea Immigration Service, Ministry of Justice

This chapter focuses on how migrant women negotiate the terms of their incorporation as naturalized Korean citizens. In the first section, I discuss three strategies by which migrant women negotiate their memberships. Applying the three-dimensional framework I introduced in Chapter Two, I argue that citizenship poses a paradox for migrant women, one that both encourages and hinders their empowerment. Next, I revisit Korea's multiculturalism campaign by tracing its evolution from a grassroots discourse aimed at including different social minorities to an official government policy focused exclusively on incorporating marriage migrant women. The last section critically engages the tensions between the multiculturalism campaign focused on migrant women and women's quest for gender equality in Korea.

Three Strategies for Negotiating Membership

Since the early 2000s, a diverse range of women's organizations have organized around migrant women's rights. I identify three different but overlapping strategies adopted by migrant women to negotiate their memberships. The first strategy focuses on migrant women's autonomy from the household and the private sphere by encouraging participation in the labor market. A second strategy of negotiating membership is through civic activism and participation in voluntary organizations aimed at transformative social and political change. Finally, a third strategy aims to negotiate membership by encouraging migrant women's active political engagement and participation. Taken together, these participatory strategies represent how migrant women seek to redefine their membership and hence citizenship.

Empowerment through paid employment

Studies on the economic status of marriage migrants reveal that migrant women harbor a strong desire for employment (Kim, Lee and Choi 2014). In 2005, the Ministry

of Health and Welfare reported that approximately 60 percent of the women surveyed were employed; of these women, 88 percent desired to remain employed, while 93 percent of those who were not presently employed desired to be employed in the future (Seol 2005:xii). Moreover, more than 74 percent of respondents had previously been employed in their countries of origin prior to marriage (Ibid).

One women's organizations that has been a prominent advocate for the labor participation of migrant women is the Korea Foundation for Women (*Han'ukuk yŏsŏng jedan*, or KFW). Founded in December 1999 by leading feminist intellectuals and leaders, such as Yoon Hyo-jung, Park Young-sook and Lee Yeon-sook, the foundation characterizes itself as the first public interest foundation for women in Korea. Under the slogan of "giving hopes to our daughters" (*ttaltŭleke hŭimangŭl*) the stated mission of the KFW is to strive towards "a gender-equal society by supporting women's grassroots efforts." Created with the support of 124 grassroots women's organizations, the KFW serves as an important source of independent funding for women's nongovernmental organizations. To this end, the KFW has financed NGO-led programs that address gender discrimination, foster women's leadership, and prevent violence against women. In recent years, empowering minority women, including the poor, the disabled, North Korean women and marriage migrants have become important priorities for the KFW.

Leaders in the KFW have supported employment training programs for migrant women because they regard employment as a central path to empowering migrant women. According to the former chairwoman of the KFW, Cho Hyeong, who is a longtime feminist activist and scholar with a long tenure at Ewha Women's University, "[f]or migrant women 'work' is not just a strategy for their livelihood, but a strategy for recognizing their existence apart from family and society, and a strategy for planning

their lives according to their own desires” (Cho 2011). In order to encourage migrant women’s employment (*ch’wieop*) and entrepreneurship (*ch’ang eop*), the KFW instituted a program for migrant women from February to December 2011. In financing the program, the KFW distributed over 400 million won (approximately US\$40,000) that it had received from institutional sponsors, Samsung Life and the Life Insurance Social Contribution Committee.⁴² The funding was distributed to a total of nine migrant women’s organizations. Six grassroots women’s organizations: Guro Women’s Human Resource Development Center, Dobong Women’s Center, Jeju Foreigners’ Shelter, Jecheon Women’s Associations United, Chilgok Counseling Center, and Tongyeong YWCA, received funding to implement vocational training programs. In addition to educating migrant women on basic economics, accounting, and the Korean labor market, these programs specifically aimed to secure jobs for migrant women as multicultural tutors, nail and hair stylists, traditional craft-makers, and domestic violence counselors.

Meanwhile, three other organizations received financial support for entrepreneurship training programs: Daegu Migrant Women’s Human Rights Center, Changwon-Masan Multicultural Family Support Center, and Choongbuk Migrant Women’s Human Rights Center. Furthermore, the entrepreneurship program focused on helping migrant women jumpstart their own commercial enterprises, including the establishment of a Thai restaurant called ‘KOON’ in Daegu. According to a progress report published by the KFW, a total of 117 women participated in the programs and 27 of the participants secured jobs after completing the program (Shin 2011).

⁴² Created in 2007, the Life Insurance Social Contribution Committee is an organization jointly founded by 18 life insurance companies to promote corporate social responsibility and to distribute funds for social contribution activities.

Perhaps the most significant impact of employment for marriage migrants is that being employed has improved their standing within the family. One marriage migrant who participated in the job training program funded by the KFW remarks, “[a]t first, I had a really difficult time here, and I regretted coming to Korea. But after learning Korean and getting work, I became happier. My children are proud when I show them the things I have made at work and my husband supports me by helping out with the household chores. I feel that my standing in the home as gone up a bit” (interview with Alice, 30 November 2011, Seoul).

Another marriage migrant who began to work as a multicultural tutor found that her employment and contribution to the household income had a visible impact on transforming her relationship with her mother-in-law: “[b]efore I started working, I felt that my mother-in-law did not respect me, and she was always yelling at me for spending too much money- her son’s money. Once I started making my own money, my mother-in-law did not say a word when I bought things and now she is more careful about how she treats me. I even overheard her as she was bragging about me to the neighbors” (interview with Bona, 26 November 2011, Seoul). These anecdotes reveal that employment can serve as a strategy to maneuver a higher position within the family, one that garners respect from other family members.

On a more personal level, job training programs like the one implemented by the KFW have instilled a sense of confidence in migrant women to engage in independent activities outside of the household. When they first arrive in Korea, many migrant women suffer from a lack of confidence and fear due to the unfamiliar environment. Working is one strategy that allows migrant women to regain a sense of confidence in their abilities and their long-term futures in Korea. Alice who is originally from the Philippines,

reflected on what working has meant for her: “I gained a lot of confidence after I started working. Because I didn’t speak Korean very well, and didn’t know many things, I was scared that I would make a mistake or wouldn’t understand what I was told, but I started to be more confident in my abilities and about my future in Korea when I began to work (interview with Alice, 30 November 2011, Seoul).” By gaining the confidence to be independent of the household and the family, migrant women like Alice and Bona are negotiating their membership beyond the boundaries of the family through their labor participation.

Contrary to dominant societal expectations that their role is to provide unpaid care labor, the employment of migrant women means that they have been able to acquire a new subjectivity as a worker. According to a staff member at the KFW, “for migrant women, participating in the labor market is not just a means of solving the family’s poverty and gaining economic stability, it is also interlocked with the *citizenship* (*simink’won*) of individual women...in expanding the range of their participation from family to the market, they are not passive subjects but active actors, who are not just the wives and mothers of Koreans, but workers and naturalized citizens (interview with KFW staff member, 26 October 2012, Seoul).”

Despite the efforts to secure the right to work however, migrant women continue to face numerous barriers to paid employment that keep their activities restricted to the realm of the family and the household. According to national surveys conducted by the Korean government in 2009 and 2012 respectively, only about 40 and 53 percent of female marriage migrants were employed (Kim 2010, Jun 2013). These figures are significantly lower than the total female labor participation rate in Korea which was approximately 57 percent in 2014, according to the National Statistics Office. The biggest

reason for the low labor participation rate of migrant women is due to childcare responsibilities (49 percent), followed by language difficulties (13 percent) and inability to find suitable work (9.6 percent) (Kim 2010:266).

Furthermore, some migrant women are unable to overcome considerable opposition from their husbands and in-laws who insist that they stay at home as full-time providers of child and elderly care for the family. While some women have been able to overcome this opposition and even secure support from family members, others have been forced to give up on employment altogether. Another difficulty in securing employment for marriage migrants comes from the fact that most prior professional training and educational credentials from the home country are not recognized in Korea. Therefore, marriage migrants who used to be in professional fields such as teaching, nursing, and accounting before coming to Korea have found that they must start anew in building their credentials in Korea which has discouraged some from entering the labor market altogether.

Third, migrant women often find it difficult to find employment outside of designated “multicultural” activities and programs. For instance, one type of job that has opened up for marriage migrants is as “multicultural lecturers” (*tamunhwa kang’sa*) hired by local governments and multicultural family support centers to educate local Korean residents on cultural diversity as “cultural ambassadors” who talk about and share their native cultures. However, these jobs are often part-time and temporary, failing to lead to longer-term prospects for employment. Regardless of these challenge however, negotiating the right to work remains an important strategy for migrant women in expanding the boundaries of their membership beyond the family.

Activists within Civil Society

Participating in voluntary organizations represents a second strategy by which migrant women negotiate their membership within Korean civil society. Originally from the coastal city of Haiphong located in northeastern Vietnam, An is one of the most prominent marriage migrant activists in the movement for migrant women. An's path to becoming an activist began with her relationship with the Korea Women Migrants Human Rights Center, the leading advocacy organization for migrant women. She first became acquainted with the Center when she visited with a friend in 2006 to enroll in Korean language classes. After completing the language classes, activists at the Center pressed her to stay on as a staff member and counselor to other migrant women because of her fluency in Korean which set her apart from her peers.

Describing herself as an "accidental activist," An remarked that hearing the personal stories of other migrant women put things in perspective for her, and she realized that she could use her knowledge about Korea to help more recent arrivals who were experiencing difficulties in Korea (interview with An, 30 October 2012, Seoul). Even though someone like An could find other better paying work because of her fluency in Korean, she remains with a nonprofit organization like the Center because she finds the work there meaningful. In an interview, An described what she liked most about her job as a counselor and activist: "[i]t is exhausting to listen to the many difficulties migrant women face in Korea, but when I give advice to someone and their lives seem to take a turn for the better, it makes the job worthwhile" (interview with An, 30 October 2012, Seoul).

Through her voluntary civic participation, An expresses a desire for transformative social change as well as for personal improvement. Her desire to achieve change stems from a direct criticism of Korean attitudes toward marriage migrants:

“Korean society views marriage migrants with the same discriminatory lens- they don’t just judge us, they look down on us. When they see us, they make assumptions about the country we came from, the color of our skin, and they ask rude questions that are filled with prejudice and discrimination. So we (migrant women) need to work together to fight this discrimination, and to change Korean society for the better” (interview with An, 30 October 2012, Seoul).

Additionally, working at the Center made An, who never had the opportunity to go to college realize that she could have a greater impact if she received more education and training. In addition to her full-time work at the Center, An has been taking online university-level courses and working towards a degree in social welfare in hopes that she can get involved in other social welfare and voluntary work in the future.

As discussed previously in Chapter Four, the Migrant Women Human Rights Center (hereafter Center) has led the movement for migrant women as the most influential advocacy organization for migrant women. Rather than emphasize the provision of welfare and social services for migrant women like government-run support centers, the Korean activists at the Center have sought to empower migrant women by encouraging and educating women to become activists (*hwaltonga*) like them who are mobilized around transforming society. To that effect, one of the Center’s main programs has been to train migrant women to become counselors who advise and assist other migrant women.

Since 2009, the Center has operated a training program through a partnership with the MGEF for migrant women who are interested in becoming domestic violence counselors, the only one of its kind for migrant women. According to activist Heo Oh

Young-sook who has been in charge of organizing the program, the program seeks to “empower migrant women by equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to help others and by instilling in them a sense of self-autonomy (*jalipshim*) instead of treating them as subjects who always require help (interview with Heo Oh Young-sook, 7 June 2010, Seoul).” Upon successful completion of the program, which requires a minimum of 100 hours of instruction, the women are officially certified by the Ministry to work as counselors in organizations such as the Emergency Hotline for Migrant Women (1577-1366), an organization under the MGEF which provides twenty-four hour support services to migrant women around the country. Since the program began, the Center has been training a class of twenty to twenty-five migrant and Korean women activists every year. Through hands-on experience gained by interacting closely with Korean activists, migrant women learn firsthand what it means to engage in contentious activism in Korea as they participate in organized protests and rallies alongside seasoned Korean activists.

Increasingly, migrant women like An are not just participating in Korean-led civic organizations but branching out and forming their own organizations, signaling the beginnings of a movement by migrant women to seek change from within Korean civil society on their own terms. The Waterdrop Society (*mulbangeul naeum sahoe*) represents one leading example of civic mobilization led by migrant women. The Waterdrop Society is a voluntary cultural organization founded in 2009 by migrant women who had gotten to know each other through the popular TV talk show “Love in Asia.”⁴³ At present, the Waterdrop Society has more than 230 members who come from more than 20 different

⁴³ Produced by KBS, the public broadcasting corporation, “Love in Asia” has aired once a week since 2005, and has chronicled the lives of different migrant women and men in Korea. It represents one of the government’s deliberate efforts to foster positive public attitudes toward cross-border and interracial married couples in Korea.

countries. The aim of the organization is empowerment and solidarity through seminars, lectures, and workshops where migrant women share stories and experiences of living in Korea. It has also organized cultural street festivals showcasing different cultural performances by migrant women. Watanabe Mika, a migrant woman from Japan and the current leader of the organization has explained the motivation of the Waterdrop Society as the “engagement in social and cultural activities that promote the rights of migrant women and the fostering of greater public consciousness towards multiculturalism” (*Yonhap News* 24 March 2014).

Talk to Me is another example of how migrant women are becoming leaders of civic organizations. Led by Iresha, a woman originally from Sri Lanka, who like Watanabe Mika was a regular panelist on “Love in Asia,” Talk to Me aims to provide a platform for migrant women to articulate themselves within civil society, instead of being spoken for by other Koreans. It poses a direct critique of some civil society organizations which have been accused of preempting the opportunity for migrant women to speak for themselves. When explaining her motivation for creating the organization, Iresha notes, “[e]ven though it has been over ten years since I lived in Korea, I felt that people treated me unkindly based on the fact that my skin color is different. I also had a hard time with the prejudice against multicultural families. There is a widespread belief that multicultural families are those who experience many hardships and thus are subjects who must be helped. I wanted to break that prejudice and to introduce the notion that migrant women are not just an underclass who needs assistance, but that they can give assistance too” (Lee 2013).

Organizations like Talk to Me and Waterdrop Society seek to challenge the government’s top-down approach to multiculturalism by fashioning migrant women as

independent members of civil society (*simin sahoe*) who actively contribute to making society more inclusive. One of the major activities of Talk to Me is the “multicultural dosirak” program. *Dosirak* refers to a home-packed lunch, similar to the Japanese *bento*. Instead of operating a Korean cooking class like most government-run programs, the Talk to Me *dosirak* program conducts cooking classes for Koreans who are taught how to cook different ethnic foods by migrant women. Another program run by the organization is the “Monika doll program” where migrant women teach Koreans how to make dolls named “Monika,” out of recycled cloth which are later sold and whose proceeds are sent to support impoverished areas in the migrant women’s home countries.

Despite these efforts, there are many barriers that migrant women face in negotiating their civic membership. For one, the women who are creating these organizations tend to compose a select and privileged handful within the migrant women population. Burdened by household, child-rearing and livelihood responsibilities, many migrant women simply do not have the time or energy to participate in these voluntary activities. One migrant woman who has belonged to an informal gathering of marriage migrants from Vietnam remarked on the difficulties of encouraging other migrant women to attend regularly:

“Usually, we make Vietnamese food, chat, and try to organize an outing about once a year. There is a membership fee to participate. Initially, there were about twenty-some people. The number has stayed more or less the same, but the people have changed a lot. Usually they come because they can’t speak Korean and are stuck at home because they’ve just given birth, but once they’ve been in Korea for a while, they have to work or have other family duties so they don’t come to the gatherings anymore (interview with Hoang, 3 August 2012, Seoul).

Another major challenge for migrant women seeking to create and participate in self-organized voluntary associations is the disproportionate number of government-run programs that cater to migrant women. One migrant woman noted that because there are

already so many programs (often free of charge) that are offered to migrant women by local governments and Korean civic organizations, they have become complacent with these services because their needs are already spoken for.

“There are people who work hard [to improve themselves] but there are many more who don’t. The policies do not encourage migrants to work hard and demand things. Many people are used to getting things for free from the government. I attended a lot of self-organized gatherings and when some people suggest doing something to change the system, many people find excuses to not participate” (interview with Lee Ra, 29 October 2012, Ilsan).

While there are signs that migrant women are increasingly asserting themselves as members of civil society by voicing their opinions and concerns, including criticisms of government policies, such anecdotes reveal that the civic participation of migrant women remains sporadic and non-committal.

Exercising Political Rights

Heightened political engagement at both the local and national levels is a third strategy adopted by migrant women to negotiate their political memberships. Lee Ra, originally from Mongolia became the first marriage migrant to be elected to public office when she became an assembly member in the Gyeonggi Provincial Assembly. Lee Ra came to Korea when she married her husband in 2003, and she became a naturalized citizen in 2008. When she arrived in Korea it was before the Korean government instituted multicultural family support policies, and there were very few places that Lee Ra could go to meet and interact with other migrant women. One of the places where she did find herself becoming active was the “Multicultural Network” (*tamunhwa neteuweurk*) affiliated with the Korean Immigration Service (KIS), which is a volunteer group that serves as a liaison between migrant women and immigration officials. Later, Lee Ra also became active in her local multicultural family support center in Ilsan city, a commuter

city outside of Seoul located in Gyeonggi province. One day, the director of the center strongly encouraged her to consider running for office by participating in the “Project to Make a Marriage Migrant Legislator” an educational program run by an organization called the Center for Korean Women and Politics (CKWP).

The Center for Korean Women and Politics (*hankuk yoseong chungchi yeonguso*) is a women’s organization that has promoted the political participation of women, especially marginalized groups of women who have been politically underrepresented such as the disabled and the working poor. One of its major achievements is in organizing efforts to institute a gender quota in the electoral system. At the time of its founding in 1990, there were only a total of six female representatives out of a total of 299 seats in the National Assembly. Due to the mobilization of women’s groups, the Political Parties Act was amended in 2000 to introduce a gender quota to the electoral system. Since then, the National Assembly saw a considerable rise in the number of seats occupied by women, and in the present 19th National Assembly, 47 seats or 16 percent of the total seats are occupied by women (IPU 2015).

Primarily a research-oriented think tank, much of the CKWP’s activities have focused on policy research on ways to increase women’s participation in politics. Most notably, the CKWP has operated an educational and training program for women who desire to become politicians by coaching potential candidates on how to secure the endorsement of political parties and on running an election campaign. The organization also runs an internship program for young women who are interested in working as legislative aides in the National Assembly and a transnational exchange program through a partnership with the Hanns Seidel Foundation in Germany. According to the MGEF, the CKWP has over 3,000 members and receives funding from the Korea National

Election Commission, a governmental organization and the Women's Development Fund which is financed jointly by the central and local governments.

The inspiration for encouraging the political participation of migrant women came from the executive director, Kim Eun-joo. During a trip to the U.S. in 2007 when she was on an exchange program sponsored by the U.S. State Department, Kim had a chance encounter with an older Korean-American woman who served as her interpreter. The interpreter, a Korean woman who had immigrated to the U.S. when she married an American in the late 1960s, had been unable to fit into American society for most of her life. However, she told Kim that she felt that Americans treated her differently once a Korean-American was elected to the Washington state senate in 1998. Her story inspired Kim to encourage marriage migrants to become political participants who have a sense of pride as immigrants (H.-J. Lee 2012). The initial goal of the project was to get one marriage migrant elected in the 2010 local elections as the first party-list candidate for a proportional representation seat.⁴⁴

One of the first participants in the program run by the CKWP, Lee Ra decided to run for a seat in the Gyeonggi Provincial Assembly for the 2010 local elections after participating in the program. Lee Ra describes her decision to run as stemming from curiosity more than anything else. Lee recounts her feelings about running at the time: "it didn't matter to me whether I won or not, I did it mostly for the experience of seeing what it was like to run for office" (interview with Lee Ra, 29 October 2012, Ilsan). Initially, she did not have a party preference but it was the conservative Grand National Party (*Hannara dang*, or GNP) that accepted her application for candidacy. When she became

⁴⁴ In the National Assembly, 54 of the 300 seats are allotted to proportional representation while 246 seats are determined by single-member constituencies.

elected, Lee Ra remarks that she was dumbfounded because she did not think that she would actually be elected, not even in her wildest dreams:

“It was hard for me to believe that I had won the seat. In Mongolia, we have a different electoral system. The party decided on me at the beginning of May and then all of a sudden I was in the public spotlight. The election was in early June, and they were asking me what I would do if I were elected. All this time, I wondered to myself, do I even have a chance at being elected? I couldn’t believe that I had actually been elected until the day after the election” (interview with Lee Ra, 29 October 2012, Ilsan).

Once she was thrown into the throes of local politics, Lee Ra notes that she gained a sense of pride and responsibility as an elected official who represented not just other migrant women, but her local constituents. As someone who had lived as a housewife and mother since arriving in Korea, she had limited public experience before her election to office. Once she became a politician however, Lee Ra realized that there were things she could do to improve people’s lives. Lee Ra also came to believe that marriage migrants have a responsibility as members of society and the political community to participate and to be well informed rather than expect Koreans to automatically accept them as equal members. According to Lee Ra,

“[a]s the first generation of multicultural family members, we (migrant women) should pave the way for the next generations. First, it requires putting in the effort to learn and speak Korean well. It is not just about surviving on a day-to-day basis but about learning and caring about Korea. It is about speaking up on behalf of multicultural families and engaging in discussions with Koreans on a range of different topics. That way, Koreans will begin to throw away their biases and acknowledge us as their equals” (interview with Lee Ra, 29 October 2012, Ilsan).

Thus, Lee Ra recognizes that political incorporation is a two-way process that demands migrants and their host societies to strive towards accepting each other as equals and as members of a political community.

Inspired by the achievements of the CKWP and women like Lee Ra, migrant women are becoming politically active and exercising their political rights. In 2010, a

group of migrant women under the leadership of Wang Ji-yeon, who is originally from China, formed the Migrant Voter's Alliance (*iju yoseong yukwonja yeonmaeng*) in 2014. Ahead of the 2014 local elections, Wang noted in an interview that she created the alliance based on the belief that other migrant women have a responsibility to know about Korean society and politics. She also notes that "there are many cases where migrant women do not vote because they are not aware that they have the right to vote. They don't know that even if they do not naturalize, they can vote in local elections if they have permanent resident status. Even if they do end up voting, they often do not know who the candidates are or who they should vote for" (*Yonhap News* 28 April 2014).

Even as migrant women are exercising their political rights in greater numbers, an unending vitriolic public backlash against Jasmine Lee, the first migrant woman to be elected to the National Assembly in 2012 highlights the limitations for migrant women in negotiating a more inclusive political membership. Two years after Lee Ra's election to office, Jasmine Lee who is originally from the Philippines, made history by becoming the first foreign-born citizen elected to the National Assembly in April 2012. Like Lee Ra, Jasmine Lee was elected as a proportional representative candidate for the conservative party. At the time of her election to office, both the international and domestic media covered the election as a shining example of how Korea had become a progressive country that embraces cultural and racial diversity.

On the other hand, the onslaught of criticisms by disgruntled hate groups that are mostly active in cyberspace demonstrates the limitations of political participation for migrant women. In the immediate aftermath of Lee's election, many bloggers and netizens launched a personal attack against Lee, expressing doubts about her credentials (common in Korean politics), but also going so far as to suggest that she might have had

a role in the death of her husband due to a freak drowning accident in 2011. More generally, the opponents raised doubts about her ability to properly represent the interests of Koreans and suggested that she would only advance the interests of foreign residents by securing greater benefits to illegal migrants. Many members of these anti-*damunhwa* groups have been Korean men who claim to be victims of fake marriage scams by migrant women.

More controversy erupted when Lee along with twenty-one other National Assembly members sponsored a bill called the “Act on the Basic Rights of Migrant Children” (*iju adong gwŏnri bojang beob*) in December 2014. This act proposed to guarantee the basic social, health, and education rights for migrant children in Korea without a legal status.⁴⁵ Despite the fact that the proposal was sponsored by a coalition of progressive and conservative lawmakers, angry Korean netizens opposed the proposed bill, referring to it as the “Lee Jasmine law” and an indicator that Lee intended to take public welfare benefits away from Koreans and extend them to illegal migrant children. Controversy erupted yet again when a news outlet MBN falsely reported in February 2015 that Lee’s teenage son had stolen hundreds of cigarette packs while working part-time in a convenience store, which led to a flurry of renewed criticism of Lee and her parenting abilities. When it was discovered that the news was false, none of the netizens who have vigilantly monitored and advocated media transparency bothered to demand an apology from the news outlet for the false report (Sung 2015).

In an op-ed, Jung Hye-sil, an anti-racism activist and the director of the Transnational Asian Women (TAW), a grassroots organization that advocates for

⁴⁵ Contrary to public opinion which associated the bill with Jasmine Lee, a coalition of migrant advocacy organizations had already pushed for the legislation which was first proposed but scrapped during the 18th National Assembly (2008-2012).

diversity among multicultural families, sought to offer an even-handed explanation as to why Jasmine Lee had become such a hated target by so many people. According to Jung, “Lee’s election elicited criticism from political pundits because she had been chosen as a PR candidate by the conservative party, which did not hide the fact that it was using her to revamp its public image. Even though she had received an education in politics, she lacked political experience and she did not have an established base of political support. Part of the opposition comes from the fact that as a migrant, there is no way [for Koreans] to evaluate how well she could represent her constituents” (Jung 2015). Based on this view, criticisms against Jasmine Lee in part reflect broader dissatisfaction with an electoral system that extends political power to underrepresented groups on the basis of a gender quota.

On the other hand, Korean activist Heo-Oh Young-sook understands the negative public sentiment towards Lee as a reflection of migrant women’s unequal citizenship: “[w]hen migrant women are portrayed as pitiful subjects, they receive sympathy, yet Koreans perceive someone like Jasmine Lee as threatening because as a public official, she appears to have more political power than the average Korean. The roots of this discomfort with Jasmine Lee stems from the fact that migrant women are not perceived as equal citizens” (Shin Yoon 2015). Although migrant women have formal political rights that allow them to reach the highest echelons of office, the ongoing controversy surrounding Jasmine Lee point to the fact that migrant women’s ability to exercise these political rights are unresolved points of contestation that reflect migrant women’s liminal status as members who are only partially incorporated.

In sum, the different strategies adopted by migrant women represent divergent ways of negotiating their memberships in the family, civil society and the state, and

challenge the notion that migrant women are passive subjects who are spoken for by others. Despite the different approaches to empowering migrant women, they share in common the focus on participation, self-improvement, and autonomy from the household. Each of these approaches emphasizes the need for migrant women to participate actively outside the private sphere, whether it is through participation in the labor force, civic organizations, or in politics. They also focus on the need for self-improvement as the basis for broader social change, where migrant women need to do their share to get their voices heard. In other words, the assumption is that migrant women need to learn how to adjust to Korean society and make their demands as rightful Korean citizens, where inclusion is not a given but something that requires effort.

Finally, all three approaches demand women's autonomy and self-reliance from the household based on the explicit understanding that women's relegation to the family and household is a major source of their oppression as well as impoverishment. The assumption is that only by participating in activities outside of the household, can migrant women become empowered as citizens.

Applying the framework of citizenship as a negotiation over 1) access to rights, 2) rights, and 3) membership that I introduced in Chapter Two, I argue that citizenship for migrant women presents a paradox, one that holds both emancipatory and oppressive possibilities. On the one hand, citizenship presents an opportunity for migrant women to demand greater rights and inclusion through efforts to seek self-improvement and autonomy from the private sphere. On the other hand, citizenship means that even with rights, including human rights, migrant women may not have the opportunity to exercise their rights because their access to rights rests on their unpaid care labor and roles in the family. Citizenship for migrant women is paradoxical in that while it guarantees a legal

status and opportunities for empowerment and engagement, in exchange, it demands that migrant women, like the majority of Korean women, take on the burden of reproducing the patriarchal family which sustains rather than undermines gender inequality.

Korea's Multiculturalism Revisited

The incorporation of marriage migrants and their children has been the exclusive focus of Korea's multiculturalism campaign. While marriage migrants constitute a comparable proportion of the foreign resident population in Japan and Taiwan, they are not the main targets of multiculturalism. The multicultural framework in Japan emphasizes the maintenance of harmonious relations between "old-comer" (i.e. Korean residents) and "newcomer" foreign residents without promoting their citizenship acquisition (Nakamatsu 2014, Flowers 2012, Chung 2010c). Meanwhile, multiculturalism in Taiwan has concentrated on the recognition of its ethnic minorities such as the aborigines, Hakka, and Hoklo ethnicities, and seeks to promote a unified sense of Taiwanese identity in the face of increased immigration from mainland China (Wang 2004, Hsia 2008). Unlike Japan and Taiwan, where multicultural frameworks are not gender-specific, the multiculturalism campaign in Korea targets foreign-born women as the subjects and objects of multicultural policies and programs. Thus, the disproportionate attention paid to migrant women in Korea presents an anomalous example of multicultural politics in East Asia.

Although Korea's multiculturalism campaign has come to be focused primarily on migrant women and their children, when the multicultural (*tamunhwa*) was first introduced as discourse, it was not initially limited to women but was used in reference to various social minorities within Korean society. Multiculturalism first entered public discourse in the context of the post-Cold War when progressive, leftist intellectuals like

cultural anthropologist Cho Haejoang and Kwon Hyuk-bum called for a multi-culture based on universal values such as peace and human rights, as a critique of the anti-communist, nationalist monoculture inherited from the Cold War period. In particular, the appeal for multiculturalism aimed at carving a public space that included the political differences of North Korean defectors who were settling in the South, a exodus that began in the aftermath of the massive famine in the North during the mid-1990s (Paik 2010: 59-60). As a call for a new political culture that tolerates political differences, multiculturalism referred not to cultural difference, but aimed to reconcile the political differences that had defined Korean politics for much of the twentieth century.

Soon thereafter, advocates of other social minorities within a growing and democratizing civil society, such as overseas Koreans who were returning to Korea, sexual minorities and migrant workers invoked the rhetoric of multiculturalism to demand their inclusion. A non-governmental organization called the Korean International Network (KIN, or *jiguchŏn dŏngpo yeondae*) created by a group of Korean-American youth in 1999 embraced the slogan of “multiculturalism, minority rights, and peace” to promote the social inclusion of different diaspora communities, including communities from the U.S., Japan, China, and the former Soviet Union who were experiencing cultural isolation and discrimination within Korean society (*Hankyoreh* 1999). Activists in the sexual minority movement which emerged in the public sphere in the late 1990s such as the Korea Homosexual Human Rights Movement (*Han’guk tongsongaeja inkwon undong hyobuihoe*) invoked multiculturalism in a call to expand the recognition of difference to include sexual difference (Seo 2001, Bong 2009).

During this time, activists within civil society also began to invoke multiculturalism to push for the inclusion of migrant workers. Beginning in the late 1980s,

migrant workers from different parts of Southeast and South Asia began to enter Korea first as undocumented labor and later as industrial trainees (J. Kim 2003, Lim 2003). In the late 1990s, activists in the migrant worker advocacy movement began to adopt the language of multiculturalism to promote rights for migrant workers (N. Kim 2009). Specifically, they invoked multiculturalism as a critique of Koreans' exclusionary and biased attitudes toward migrant workers and foreigners more generally and to push for a transformation within Korean society (S. Lee 2007).

Not only the advocates of migrant workers, but civic organizations that provide assistance to mixed-race families invoked multiculturalism to demand that derogatory labels toward mixed-race be abandoned. In 2003, a Protestant Christian organization called HiFamily spearheaded a public campaign against the use of the term '*honhyeol*' (or mixed-blood) by submitting an official petition to the Korea National Commission on Human Rights⁴⁶ that argued that the use of the term represented a human rights violation for mixed-race people (H. Kim 2007:208).⁴⁷ HiFamily instead recommended that *honhyeol* be replaced with the term, "2nd generation multicultural families" (*damunhwa gajeong*). These discursive contests over multiculturalism by different grassroots actors within civil society thus preceded the official adoption of Korea's multiculturalism campaign.

⁴⁶ Established in 2001 by the National Human Rights Commission is an independent governmental body that monitors the human rights situation in the country by investigating human rights violations and making policy recommendations.

⁴⁷ In the petition, HiFamily argued that the treatment of *honhyorin* as those who are mal-adjusted to society by associating them with "ex-convicts," "uneducated," "orphans," is a human rights violation and likened it to the word "Negro" in the U.S. context. Furthermore, the report stated that by eliminating the use of *honhyorin* and replacing it with "second-generation multicultural family" would help to "alleviate the pain for mixed race individuals and help them become rightful Korean citizens who contribute to national interest" (*Christian Today* 2003).

The institution of a major policy framework to socially integrate marriage migrants and their children, called the “Support Measures to Integrate Female Marriage Immigrant Families” in 2006 marked the beginning of the state’s appropriation of the multiculturalist rhetoric. In appropriating the discourse of multiculturalism, the Korean government was responding to two distinct impulses: the first, grassroots pressure from civic organizations, especially women’s organizations to address human rights concerns and the second, the crisis of social reproduction facing families due to low birth and rapid aging (H. Lee 2008, N. Kim 2007).

Although the Korean government enthusiastically embraced the slogan of an “open (transparent) multicultural society,” (*yöllin tamunhwa sahoe*) a closer scrutiny of the policies reveal that at no point does the government’s use of the term “multicultural” suggest the adoption of multiculturalism as a new guiding political ideology or principle. As Park Jin-kyeong (2010:178), a scholar at Ewha Women’s University notes, multicultural society merely refers to a “social phenomenon describing increases in diversity, not a normative concept or an orientation towards a political principle.” For instance, the government’s blueprint for foreigner-related policy, the *1st Basic Plan on Foreigner Policy* announced by the Ministry of Justice in 2008, reveals that “multicultural society” denotes the “recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity in society,” and neither presents a plan of action nor a shift in political orientation toward immigrants and their rights (MOJ 2008).

The onset of the state’s multiculturalism campaign brought “multicultural families” (*tamunhwa kajok*), or the families of marriage migrants and their Korean spouses to the center of public attention as newly celebrated members of Korean society. In 2008, with the passage of the Act to Support Multicultural Families (hereafter Support Act) by the

National Assembly, “multicultural family” became a fixed legal category that accords human rights protection and welfare benefits to those who are identified as such.

While the official definition of marriage migrant is not gender-specific, because the vast majority of marriage migrants or more than 70 percent have been women, the policies have been catered to women in their roles as wives and mothers. Aimed at the secure and stable adjustment of multicultural families, the Support Act outlines the responsibilities of the central and local governments to provide educational and social services through the operation of local support centers. Unlike multicultural legislation found in countries that embrace multiculturalism as a political philosophy, the Support Act did not aim to protect cultural rights for multicultural subjects nor prevent discrimination, but to provide support to families deemed to be non-normative and precarious due to their marginal status.

Sociologist Hye-soon Kim (2012:149) characterizes the multicultural family support policy as “a hybrid policy that combines existing family policies with immigrant policy.” The hybrid nature comes from the fact that marriage migrants are both immigrants and members of families. While multicultural family support policy recognizes marriage migrants as immigrants -in fact, they are the only category of migrants that the government refers to as immigrants (or *iminja*) in official documents- the emphasis of the policy is on providing services to marriage migrants in their capacity as members of families, rather than as immigrants. The Korean government’s reluctance to promote an immigrant policy independent from the framework of family is consistent with its stance on restrictive immigration which refuses to acknowledge the presence of an immigrant community other than that of marriage migrants.

The appropriation of state funding for multicultural family support programs since 2006 set in motion a multicultural “boom” as numerous state and non-state organizations oriented their activities toward implementing programs for multicultural families (N. Kim 2007). Among policymakers, the domain of multicultural policies has become a site of power struggle, as various governmental agencies, especially the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MGEF) have competed for jurisdiction over policy implementation (Lee 2008). The MOJ has historically been in charge of all policies related to foreign residents, including overseas Koreans with foreign citizenship, while the MHW implemented social welfare and educational programs for families and children until the expansion of the MGEF in 2005.

According to one of the country’s leading experts on multicultural family policies, the entrusting of multicultural family policies to the MGEF the smallest and least powerful of the government ministries, first in 2005 and then again in 2011, provoked criticism from officials within the MHW and the MOJ who were not happy with the new funding that was being directed to the MGEF (interview with Chung Ki-seon, 3 November 2011, Goyang).⁴⁸ The consequence of this inter-ministerial power struggle has been a remarkable lack of coordination in policy formation and execution, and a web of overlapping programs that undermine effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services and programs to multicultural families (B. Lee 2009, Kim 2011).

⁴⁸ As discussed in Chapter Three, from 2009 to 2011, the Lee Myung-bak government significantly downsized the MGEF by transferring the family policy division to the MHW which first implemented the multicultural family support policies. Due to continued opposition from the women’s movement, the family policy bureau was transferred back to the MGEF in 2011.

Not only at the government level, but also within civil society, the channeling of public resources towards multicultural families triggered a competition among local governments and a broad range of civic organizations to secure government funding to implement programs for multicultural families. The majority of the state's funding has gone into the operation of multicultural family support centers and in particular, the Korean language instruction programs. The Support Act mandates local governments to subsidize funding for voluntary organizations and NGOs that provide services for multicultural families.

As a result, hundreds of civil society organizations such as educational institutes, social welfare organizations, and charitable foundations with little prior interest or experience with multiculturalism have flocked to partner with local governments to offer a variety of multicultural family programs (KIHf 2011). According to one migrant activist who lives on Jeju Island, "because engaging in these support activities provides relatively easy access to state funding, it has become "profitable" and "trendy" to institute multicultural family programs for many different kinds of citizens' organizations" (interview with Jung Yong-ha, 7 March 2012, Jeju).

In little over a decade, multiculturalism in Korea has unexpectedly morphed from a broadly inclusive term used by various social minorities, including North Korean defectors, diaspora communities, sexual minorities, and migrant workers to the narrow category of marriage migrants whose status is legitimated by their marriage and family ties to Koreans. While scholars in Korea continue to debate whether *damunhwa* should be considered a variant of liberal multiculturalism or a distinct Korean concept with no other parallel, what is clear is that Korea's multiculturalism campaigns strikes a stark contrast

with the “multicultural citizenship” espoused by Will Kymlicka (1995) and other liberal theorists (N. Kim 2009, Seol 2010).

In advocating a liberal and just citizenship, Will Kymlicka (1995) proposed group-differentiated rights for cultural minorities and immigrants. By group rights, Kymlicka (1995: 35-44) refers to the right of a collective to regulate the activity of its members in any way it wishes, including but not limited to language, religious exemptions, political representation rights, and the right of self-government. Rather than a moral need to recognize cultural difference, the multiculturalism campaign in Korea seeks to minimize cultural difference by encouraging “gender sameness” which demands foreign women to conform to gender roles by demanding their total cultural and linguistic assimilation (H. Kim 2010, Cheng 2011:1641).

***Tamunhwa* and the Korean Women’s Movement**

In various different countries, multiculturalism and multicultural practices have come under fire from feminist scholars who have pointed to how multicultural policies can exacerbate the gender inequality of minority women. One perspective of this view has been presented by political theorist Susan Moller Okin (199) who criticized group differentiated rights as something that can negatively impact minority women by perpetuating the patriarchal practices of minority cultures. Okin further claimed that gender equality and the protection of women should take precedence over the demand of minority cultures to claim group rights.

By pointing to how the advancement of group rights may actually perpetuate inequalities, especially gender inequalities within the group, Okin’s critique raises an important question about the tension between group rights and inequality within the group. Although Kymlicka argues that it is possible to reconcile individual autonomy and

group rights, Okin is unwilling to support external protections for a minority culture that may inadvertently condone abuses against minority women. In her view, feminists have a moral obligation to choose the rights of minority women over cultural rights.

More broadly, multiculturalism has been problematic because of what some perceive to be a one-dimensional treatment of difference. Nancy Fraser (1996) has argued that a “pluralist” multiculturalism in the U.S. is problematic because it is premised on celebrating difference while failing to interrogate its relation to different kinds of inequality, such as class, race, and gender. Difference for Fraser, is not solely rooted in culture. When difference is treated as if it pertained exclusively to culture, Fraser argues that it “divorces difference from questions of material inequality, power differentials among groups, and systemic relations of dominance and subordination” (Fraser, 1996:70). Thus for Fraser, the singlehanded focus on cultural difference is inadequate in addressing the larger questions of equality and justice. Instead of attempting to transcend difference, Iris Marion Young (1990) presented another approach that is based on the recognition and respect for difference across various cleavages.

While appreciative of Okin’s critique of multiculturalism, other scholars have attempted to reconcile the tension between culture and gender rights. Ayelet Shachar (2001), a legal scholar, acknowledges that multicultural policies protecting cultural groups can be harmful to individuals but that defenses of differentiated citizenship rights should be honored as long as they are not promoting the systemic maltreatment of individuals within the group. Perhaps in the strongest critique of Okin, Seyla Benhabib and Judith Resnick (2009) have argued that minority women should not have to make a choice between their culture and rights as women. Such a dichotomous framework for discussions of multiculturalism denies women the agency to shape culture as well as

gender. Rather, they argue that it is possible for women to forge a middle path between their culture and their gender by empowering themselves to articulate their own points of view (Benhabib and Resnick 2009: 285).

Similarly, feminist scholars and activists in Korea have critiqued the multiculturalism campaign as reinforcing gender inequality. Unlike Western liberal multiculturalism which some feminists have associated with perpetuating patriarchy by granting cultural protections to minority groups, Korean women's activists have argued that multicultural policies in Korea reinforce patriarchy by *denying* cultural rights to migrant women. They point to how multicultural family support programs have encouraged foreign women to become "proper" mothers and wives of Koreans through an emphasis on Korean language acquisition and cultural learning.

For example, the *Guidebook to Living in Korea* published by the MGEF (2014) for marriage migrants explicitly emphasizes the need for rapid assimilation by stating that "marriage immigrants who understand the characteristics of Korean families can more easily adjust themselves to their new families and understand Korean culture" (MGEF 2014:72-3). For marriage migrants who are having difficulty adjusting to life in Korea, the guidebook further suggests that marriage migrants learn more about family traditions from their husbands and in-laws (Ibid). By unilaterally demanding assimilation into the Korean family and culture without regard for the native cultures of migrant women, government programs treat migrant women as "if they have no culture of their own" (interview with Heo-Oh Young-Sook, 22 June 2012, Seoul). Failed to be recognized as bearers of culture, migrant women are deprived of their cultural rights by the overwhelming pressure to assimilate as quickly as possible.

The demand for immediate assimilation has meant that marriage migrants more than any other migrant group are subject “to the strongest and harshest demands for assimilation” where they are often denied the basic right to choose the foods they eat and the languages they speak within the household (Han 2007: 45). Marriage migrants also regard cultural differences as the biggest source of conflict and difficulty in their adjustment in Korea (Wang 2005, Kim 2006). Huan, a marriage migrant from Vietnam, recounted how her mother-in-law demanded that she eat only Korean food during her pregnancy even though she could not stomach the spiciness of Korean food. “One day I managed to eat some squid that I had brought from Vietnam, but my mother-in-law scolded me angrily. She even accused me of harming my baby by eating “unsanitary” food. I was so shocked and hurt by her words” (interview with Huan, 28 August 2012, Guri). Disagreements and quarrels over food created tension between Huan and her mother-in-law, making her first few years in Korea quite miserable. Stories like Huan’s demonstrate the intense societal pressure exerted upon migrant women to assimilate and fulfill anachronistic gender roles within the family.

Not only does the multiculturalism campaign work to deny cultural rights for migrant women, women’s activists have pointed to how it normatively assumes migrant women to be reproducers and primary caregivers within families. For instance, they have pointed to how public support for migrant women is discriminatory in that it provides welfare and health services to migrant women who are pregnant or soon to be pregnant. Women who do not wish to become mothers are regarded with suspicion and openly excluded from the services that are offered to migrant mothers, including Basic

Livelihood Support.⁴⁹ The heavy emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth and infant care reflects the normative assumption that marriage migrants have an instrumental purpose: to culturally and biologically reproduce Koreans families (H. Lee 2012).

Even as they criticize the government's policies, women's organizations and activists are nevertheless complicit in promoting the multiculturalism campaign because many of them rely on public funding and have been co-opted into implementing government programs. Women's organizations along with the MGEF have been the primary operators of the government-sponsored multicultural family support centers. For one, women's organizations recognize that multicultural family policies do come with tangible benefits for migrant women.

Due to the multicultural "boom," more Koreans than ever are aware of the issues facing migrant women and their attitudes toward diversity and multiculturalism have begun to shift (J. Hwang 2010). The exponential growth of publicly and privately-run support organizations mean that migrant women especially in urban areas have many places where they can go for assistance and support services. The creation of an emergency hotline for migrant women and the expansion of shelters and counseling centers have no doubt been beneficial to vulnerable and abused migrant women. Although the multicultural family support centers can be interpreted as increased state management of families, they have also served to provide migrant women with a space to forge their own social networks and communities.

⁴⁹ Basic Livelihood Support is a social welfare program that provides basic livelihood assistance to low-income households. Migrant women who have not naturalized qualify for livelihood support only if they are taking care of a minor who is a Korean citizen.

When asked about what was most problematic about Korea's multiculturalism, Han Kuk-yeom of the Women Migrants Human Rights Center and a leader of the migrant women's advocacy movement remarked:

"In theory, there is nothing wrong with having policies that support migrant women. But the greatest problem with *tamunhwa* is that it fails to properly reflect on the role of patriarchy in producing marriage migration in the first place. Because the policies are directed at multicultural families and not specifically for women, migrant women, who don't fit the normative stereotype, like those who don't have children, cannot benefit from multicultural policies. As long as we condone patriarchal practices, we continue to jeopardize the human rights of migrant women" (interview with Han Guk Yeom, 29 February 2012, Seoul).

As I discuss in Chapter Four, migrant women advocacy activists who were previously involved in women's struggles against trafficking, sexual violence and prostitution have long problematized the phenomenon of marriage migration *prior* to the multiculturalism campaign, indicating that activists do not view the oppression of migrant women as a result of the multiculturalism campaign but as the product of a strong tradition of patriarchal family relations. According to women's activists, it is these patriarchal traditions that made marriage migration, a process that commodifies women into a wide commercial success, one that is sustained by the collusion between local governments, village and community associations, and individual Korean families. For women's activists, the multiculturalism campaign then is a symptom and not the cause of patriarchy.

By distinguishing between multiculturalism and patriarchy, women's activists like Han are careful not to reduce Korea's multiculturalism campaign to a practice of patriarchy. In fact, they acknowledge that many gains have been made in protecting the rights of migrant women through the state's growing responsiveness to demands for human rights protections from the women's movement. For instance, the state's efforts to

include measures to protect migrant women's human rights- e.g. the expansion of counseling centers and shelters for battered migrant women- are a testament to the close partnership between the women's organizations and the state. Furthermore, as discussed earlier in this chapter, women's organizations have relied on state funding to foster migrant women's education, career development and entry into various spheres of public life which have opened up new avenues for migrant women to negotiate their memberships within Korean society.

In conclusion, the uncomfortable but constitutive relationship between women's organizations and the state in negotiating migrant women's citizenship demonstrate how the multiculturalism campaign has unintended consequences for women's organizations. As I discussed earlier, the multiculturalism campaign has opened up a space for migrant women to negotiate their memberships in multiple collectivities and thus have led to their increased participation in the economic, social, political and civic spheres. While women's organizations recognize that the multiculturalism campaign has structured opportunities for the participation and engagement of migrant women, they are also acutely aware that the campaign is based on articulations of patriarchal ideals concerning the family and womanhood that work to reinforce gender inequality. Thus, the multiculturalism campaign poses a major dilemma for women's organizations: one that both facilitates and hinders the empowerment of migrant women.

CONCLUSION

Citizenship under Negotiation

According to a 2010 survey conducted jointly by the MGEF and a leading conservative newspaper the *Donga Ilbo* on Korean attitudes towards multiculturalism, seven out of ten Koreans believed that Korea is no longer an ethnically homogeneous society, but a multicultural one (Woo 2010). While such results reveal shifts in conceptions of national identity, these ongoing shifts have not necessarily translated into a widespread acceptance of multiculturalism. A 2012 survey conducted by the MGEF on public receptiveness towards multiculturalism reported that only 36.2 percent of Koreans support cultural diversity. In contrast, the average public receptiveness towards multiculturalism in the EU was 73.8 percent (*Chosun Ilbo* 19 April 2010). Furthermore, one in three Koreans responded that they do not want a neighbor of a different race according to the 2013 World Values Survey (Fisher 2013). These conflicting statistics point to the fact that Korean attitudes toward diversity and national identity are shifting in accordance with demographic changes, but many Koreans remain undecided about whether or not to fully embrace multiculturalism.

Korea continues to maintain restrictive immigration and citizenship policies that deny citizenship to the majority of its foreign resident population. Korean citizenship remains defined by the principle of *jus sanguinis*, where citizenship is bestowed exclusively to those whose parents are Korean citizens. Conversely, children born in Korea to non-citizen parents remain unable to lay claims to Korean nationality. Such restrictive policies have resulted in more than 3,000 children born to undocumented migrant workers in Korea who have been rendered stateless (*Yonhap News* 20 November 2014). The majority of migrants, or approximately 800,000 migrant workers, are regarded

as sojourners who are institutionally denied access to long-term denizenship through controls that restrict the permitted length of stay. These restrictive measures have correlated with a sizable undocumented population which amounted to over 183,000 migrants according to official estimates by the Korea Immigration Service in 2013 (KIS 2013).

Despite its grand posturing of progressive liberal inclusiveness, the Korean model of multiculturalism rests upon a conservative and gendered conception of belonging and membership. On the one hand, multicultural practices have promoted the incorporation of immigrant women and their mixed-race children; on the other hand, these practices have excluded the rest of the foreign population as permanent outsiders. For instance, the disproportionate focus on marriage migrant women has meant the exclusion of foreign men married to Korean women, who comprise approximately 10 to 15 percent of all marriage migrants and who have not benefited from most of the services and protections extended to marriage migrant women. Such gendered practices of multiculturalism have worked to rearticulate the link between citizenship, gender and nationhood.

Contrary to the conventional view that pits multiculturalism against national identity, the case of Korea illustrates how multicultural rhetoric and practices can be appropriated by the state and civil society actors to reinforce ideas about nationhood. In the name of multiculturalism, both Korean state and non-state actors have promoted the gendered construction of nationhood where the symbolic boundaries of the nation are articulated through feminine ideals of domesticity and reproduction. Similarly, in the UK, various ethnic communities were granted a representative stake in the political system based on a national identity that was decidedly against assimilation but instead sought to manage race relations. For decades, Germany sought to maintain its ethnic national

identity under the rhetoric of multiculturalism by encouraging immigrants, mostly from Turkey, to maintain separate communities, and by denying citizenship to them until the 1990s.

Returning to the central questions initially posed this study: what explains the disjuncture between citizenship policies based on ethnocultural homogeneity and practices that espouse immigrant incorporation under the rhetorical banner of multiculturalism? Furthermore, why have marriage migrant women who comprise a small minority of the foreign population been situated at the center of Korea's efforts to promote multiculturalism? Explanations that are rooted in international norms, the developmental state, and civil society ultimately overlook the prominence of gender in Korean immigration politics. I argue that this gendered immigrant incorporation reflects the unintended consequence of negotiations between state efforts to regulate women's access to rights and the attempts by women's organizations and migrant women to secure rights and expand memberships. Applying a framework that defines citizenship as an ongoing negotiation across three dimensions - access to rights, rights, and multiple memberships- this dissertation demonstrates that citizenship ultimately poses a paradox for women, one that holds emancipatory potential on the one hand, and unintended costs that reinforce women's unequal and subordinated status on the other hand.

This study has sought to explain how the efforts of the state to regulate women's access to rights have shaped women's- both Korean and migrant- attempts to negotiate their rights and memberships. In analyzing the evolution of family planning into family policies, I demonstrate the continuation in state efforts to incorporate women through controls on their reproductive labor. Under authoritarian rule, the state instituted family planning policies which aimed to curb the population growth rate by mobilizing women

to adopt contraceptive practices. Even after the transition to democracy in 1987 and the emergence of a grassroots women's movement that demanded gender equality, the state continued to maintain its family planning program until the 1990s. In the mid-2000s, mobilized conservative interests pushed for the reformulation of family planning into family policies which institutionalized women's access to social rights through their roles as the primary care providers of families. These policies were expanded in 2008 to incorporate marriage migrant women as providers of care who make the social and biological reproduction of families and the nation possible. In short, the institution and expansion of family policies reflect state efforts to regulate women's access to rights through the gendered division of labor.

From the grassroots, women's organizations have mounted challenges to these top-down efforts to incorporate women by mobilizing around women's rights as human rights. Led by progressive grassroots organizations like the Korea Women's Associations United, the Korea Women's Hotline, and Womenlink, women's activists have integrated human rights into the movement's agenda since the late 1990s. The integration of human rights was accompanied by broader changes in the relationship between the women's movement and the state from a confrontational to a more cooperative and negotiated relationship where they have worked together to expand support services such as counseling and shelters to women. Although women's groups succeeded in waging campaigns that led to the passage of formative legislation aimed at preventing and punishing sexual violence, domestic violence and prostitution, the institutionalization of human rights has not been without major shortcomings and unresolved points of contestation among activists.

Meanwhile women's organizations, led by the Women Migrants Human Rights Center capitalized on the emergence of migrant women as the new victims of gender violence and patriarchy to renegotiate the terms of women's rights and memberships. The convergence between the state's concerns about population decline and the crisis of the family and women's human rights advocacy efforts led to the institution of support policies for marriage migrants and their families in 2006 which marked the beginning of Korea's shift towards multiculturalism. Through partnerships with the state, women's organizations have supported migrant women as they engage in multiple strategies to negotiate more equal memberships in the family, within civil society, and as members of the state. Perhaps most notably, women's organizations have facilitated the political incorporation of migrant women by encouraging them to exercise their political rights through political participation and engagement. As a result, Korea welcomed its first naturalized citizen, Jasmine Lee, to the National Assembly in 2012. Over time however, women's organizations have found themselves implementing policies that work to incorporate migrant women in ways that reaffirm rather than challenge patriarchal ideals of the family and womanhood that they have long opposed.

The contradictions of citizenship and immigration politics reflect the broader tensions between gender equality and democracy in Korea. Despite the advancement of women's rights and increased women's participation in all spheres of public life, there are many indicators that Korea is still far from reaching a measure of gender equality that is comparable to other advanced countries. While Korea has witnessed a growing number of women in positions of power, including the election of the first female President, Park Geun-hye in 2012, it has consistently ranked near the bottom when it comes to the number of women in cabinet-level positions and in the legislature. The Inter-

Parliamentary Union and UN Women ranked Korea 91st out of 145 countries in terms of the number of women in parliament (IPU 2014). In the present day, women occupy about 16 percent of seats in the National Assembly, and the majority of them are proportional representation candidates, meaning that female legislators are often single-term legislators.

The gender wage gap in Korea is also the widest among developed countries, where women are paid on average 37 percent less than their male counterparts (OECD, 2012). The gap is the largest in the banking sector where male employees on average earn 2.2 million won (US\$1977) more than female employees (*Korea Herald* 18 March 2015). In 2012, the World Economic Forum reported that ranked Korea 108 out 135 countries in terms of gender equality. When gender equality is considered part of a broad cultural change that supports the growth and strength of democratic institutions, these indicators bode ill for long-term democratic progress in Korea (Inglehart 2003).

Re-conceptualizing Citizenship

The findings of this study challenge conventional understandings of citizenship as empowering, inclusive and transformative. The task facing feminists then is how to envision a citizenship that is based on solidarity in difference, one that recognizes the different positionings of women, but includes them as equals. As a starting point, this study suggests the need for more comparative research on how immigrant women shape the politics of immigration as central political actors. All too often studies of immigration have neglected women as independent actors and treated them as passive subjects who remain dependent on men. Immigrant women do actively contest and negotiate the terms of their incorporation, but they may not always be visible because these negotiations often occur within the realm of the household, especially in the case of migrant domestic

workers. An approach to citizenship that focuses on the bargaining between the state and women over different yet overlapping dimensions can provide critical comparative insights as to what is gained and lost in the negotiation of citizenship. This study also suggests that migrant women despite being partially incorporated have tools at their disposal to negotiate more expansive rights and memberships. As Seyla Benhabib and Judith Resnik (2009) persuasively argue, only by allowing migrant women to voice their own concerns can we begin to think of a more inclusive citizenship.

Second, the findings of this study suggest the need for further research on whether civil society organizations hinder or facilitate the incorporation of immigrants as equal members. In Korea, not only women's groups but broader categories of civil society organizations such as faith-based, pro-labor, and human rights organizations have dominated advocacy efforts for migrant labor. As intermediaries between the state and migrant communities, these civil society advocates with a well-polished repertoire and mobilization strategies have been able to secure significant reforms from the state in a relatively short period of time. Although their actions have been well-intentioned, these organizations have also drawn criticisms as to whether or not they are misrepresenting the interests of those who matter the most: the migrants. The advocacy movement for migrant workers began as a partnership between migrant workers and Korean civil society leaders (Lim 2003); however, Korean leaders have dominated in dictating the agenda and mobilization strategies which have led to criticism that these civil society organizations harbor "paternalistic" attitudes toward migrant workers (D. Kim 2011).

Similarly, the presence of migrant women invigorated Korean women's activists, many of them former pro-democracy activists, to revisit unresolved issues involving gender violence, human rights, and trafficking. Consequently, Korean women have

dominated the advocacy efforts on behalf of migrant women especially when it comes to decision making and strategizing the needs of the migrant women communities. For instance, mainstream women's organizations like the KWAU and the women's ministry, the MGEF, have represented migrant women's interests to the central government and to the National Assembly. By continuing to speak on behalf of migrant women, these organizations reinforce a hierarchal relationship between Korean and migrant women; only when migrant women can speak for themselves can they begin to redefine multiculturalism and to negotiate a citizenship that it is more inclusive and equal.

Finally, by focusing on gender, this study has demonstrated how immigrant incorporation can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can present an opportunity to challenge gender inequalities by facilitating women's access to rights and expanding their rights and memberships. On the other hand, gender hierarchies can structure immigrant incorporation so that it replicates and reproduces gender, class and racial inequalities in ways that incorporate migrant women as members with an unequal and subordinated status. This finding suggests that future research on immigrant incorporation would benefit from shifting the lens away from the formal granting of rights as a measure of incorporation to an examination of whether or not immigrants have the opportunity to access and exercise their rights.

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